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The Hero of Vincennes

THE STORY OF
GEORGE ROGERS CLARK

BY
LOWELL THOMAS

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
F. C. YOHN

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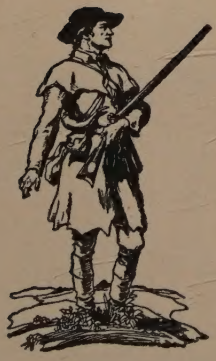

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The Hero of Vincennes

CHAPTER I

BEYOND THE RANGES: THE LURE OF THE WEST

Two lads sat in the crotch of an apple tree watching a man swinging with long strides down a dusty road. Though there were few people about at the time, those who met him merely nodded a friendly greeting and passed on. But if that same man were to appear in any of our towns to-day, a crowd of youngsters would be tagging at his heels, and grown people, too, would be gazing curiously at his picturesque costume.

The older boy, Jonathan, turned to his little brother,

'Maybe he comes from the Blue Ridge and has seen Indians.'

'Or maybe bears,' replied George Rogers.

The man had reached the end of the lane and turned into the path that led past the boys to the low, wide-verandahed house behind them. He stopped for a moment in the shade and lowered his long, heavy-barreled rifle from his shoulder. Though he was a tall man, when the deep-scooped butt-plate of his rifle rested on the ground,

the muzzle just grazed his chin. He brushed back the furry coonskin cap from his forehead and mopped his face on the sleeve of his leather shirt. He glanced down at his leather breeches and carefully removed some burrs that had caught in the wide fringe that ran the length of the side seams. Next he inspected his soft buckskin moccasins and tightened the thongs that bound them to his feet. He straightened up, rearranged the hunting-knife and tomahawk that hung in his wide leather belt, settled the shot-pouch and powder-horn that swung from straps over his left shoulder and under his right elbow, picked up his gun, and started up the lane.

'Howdy, boys,' he said, as he looked up at them. 'Is this the home of Mr. John Clark, late come from Albemarle County?'

'Yes, sir, it is,' answered Jonathan, 'and I think he's out by the smokehouse, over where you see that smudge rising back of the trees. But, sir, where have you come from? Have you — have you been in the Indian country? Your clothes look ——'

'Yes, Sonny, I've seen Indians; plenty of the varmints. I've just come from over the Blue Mountains and the Alleghanies beyond. I've come from what you may have heard your father call the "Dark and Bloody Ground," where the Indians do so much of their hunting, where they fight each other, and where they stop quarreling among themselves in order to kill every white man they can find.'

'And, sir, did you see any bears?' asked George Rogers.

'Bears! Ho-ho!' and the tall hunter threw back his head and laughed. 'Sonny, the Dark and Bloody Ground is full of bears, big bears and little brown bears. They're most as thick as rabbits. And there are buffalo, great herds of them that roam in thousands over the wide, grassy

plains, grazing like the cattle in your father's pasture. And when they are frightened and they stampede, the ground shakes and trembles under your feet and the noise is like thunder in a mountain gorge. Big, magnificent brutes, they are, Sonny. And then there are the elk with their big horns, thousands of them. And you can see more deer in one morning than you could find here in a week's hunting.'

'But we have lots and lots of deer here,' interrupted George Rogers.

'Ho-ho,' laughed the hunter; 'you've never seen deer to compare with the herds in the Dark and Bloody Ground. The forests are full of them. And what forests they are! Great trees that three men can scarce reach around. And in the forests it's like a great park in places. And here and there are thickets so dense you can only get through if you follow the animal trails. The buffalo make most of the trails, Sonny, and they wind like roads through the woods and over the mountains. And along the streams there are beaver and mink and muskrat. And there are coons and foxes and panthers — big, dusty-looking cats they are, and it's a good hunter who bags many a one of them, because they're too smart. If it weren't for the Indians all the time on the warpath, Sonny, the Dark and Bloody Ground would be most like Paradise. But the Indians won't get you if you're smarter than they are, and I'm going back there when I've done my business. I've come with news for your father about the war against the French and Indians.' Whereupon the tall hunter turned on his heel and strode toward the column of smoke.

For a time the boys sat silent, each roving in his own mind through the country of the Dark and Bloody

Ground, picturing the herds of game, encountering the marauding bands of Indians. 'They won't get you if you're smarter than they are' were the words of the hunter, and that phrase had stuck in the mind of George Rogers. To be smarter than the Indian meant a knowledge of woodcraft, it meant the finest of marksmanship with the long-barreled rifle which George Rogers was scarcely able to lift to his shoulder; it meant a hardy physique that could withstand the life in the open, days and nights without shelter from the cold and rain, and often without food; it meant self-control, determination, quick and accurate judgment, and utter fearlessness.

'I'd love the Dark and Bloody Ground,' thought George Rogers to himself, 'and I'll learn to be smarter than the Indian, and when I grow up I'll go out there and show 'em!'

CHAPTER II

PLANTATION DAYS IN OLD VIRGINIA

When Thomas Jefferson was nine years old, he heard his mother and father discussing the new baby that had just been born at the home of their nearest neighbors, the John Clarks. It was a boy and was duly christened George Rogers. A new baby was not particularly interesting to a boy of nine, so young Thomas was still unaware that in after years George Rogers Clark would be one of his most admired and respected friends.

This was in the year 1752, November 19. The adjoining plantations of the Jeffersons and Clarks were in Albemarle County in western Virginia, about twelve miles east of the beautiful, densely wooded Blue Ridge Mountains, back of which the sun went down into the mysterious and little explored land of the Alleghanies and the plains beyond. Albemarle County was a frontier county where Indians were frequently seen, sometimes on peaceable visits and sometimes in their war paint. It was a place where boys spent their time in hunting and fishing and riding horseback and exploring the mountains that rose so near by. But always there was the shadow of the Indian, and the boys had to keep a sharp lookout lest they be kidnaped and carried off to be adopted into the Indian tribes, or, worse still, lest they be killed and scalped, for to an Indian

the scalp of a boy was a trophy as valuable as the scal of a hunter or soldier.

But all this made the hunting expeditions the mo exciting and made the boys more apt in learning th caution of the hunter.

At this time, nearly twenty-five years before the Amer can Revolution, the people living in Virginia were Britis subjects as were the other American colonists up an down the Atlantic Coast. But Eastern Canada, excep Nova Scotia, and the valleys of the Mississippi and Ohi Rivers were claimed by the French. The French clai was supported in fact by numerous forts and towns a such places as Detroit, Vincennes, Kaskaskia, Cahoki and many others; all names you will meet again and agai in this tale of exploration and Indian wars. These for were well garrisoned by French soldiers, and the *coureu de bois* came and went, buying furs from the Indians i exchange for knives and tomahawks and powder an bullets. French priests — *pères* they were called — wer out into these towns as missionaries to the Indians an to take care of the souls as well as the bodies of th French soldiers and traders and trappers. They bui churches near the forts and about them sprang up th homes and trading-posts of the French immigrants. S the French were well established in this country, and the had every intention of holding it for themselves and kee ing the valuable fur trade exclusively in their own hand

On the other hand, the American colonists insisted tha their original grants of land 'from sea to sea' entitle them to the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi River and, furthermore, they had specific treaties with th Indians granting them this territory. King George and his Ministers backed the colonists in their demands

This situation led the Governor of Virginia, in 1753, to all on a young major, twenty-one years old, to carry a nessage to the Commandant of the French fort at the forks of the Ohio,' which is now Pittsburgh, demanding hat he withdraw from British territory. This young man vas George Washington. At this time George Rogers Clark was just one year old. The French refused to withraw, and the next year saw the start of the French and ndian War, or the Seven Years' War, as it is sometimes alled.

Then, in 1755, General Braddock, with George Washngton, made a sadly unsuccessful expedition to Fort Duquesne at the 'forks of the Ohio.' General Braddock vas killed, his army routed, and the remnants retreated ack across the mountains, leaving the whole western rontier unprotected from the French and Indians.

For the next few years stories of massacres and scalpings nd Indian raids kept coming to the ears of Mr. Clark in lbemarle County, and they were in such constant danger f attack that in 1757 the family moved to a new estate n Caroline County, farther east. Here the Clarks had nany friends and relatives, and the children had a better pportunity for schooling. It was here that George Rogers ved with his family until he was nineteen.

A great deal can happen between the ages of five and ineteen, and, though George Rogers's boyhood was typial of the time, it was decidedly different from the life of nose of us born a hundred and fifty years or more after evolutionary War days.

George Rogers and his brother Jonathan, who was only vo years his senior, were inseparable companions. They ent to school at the home of their uncle, Donald Robertn, who was a well-educated man and taught them most

of what they learned from books. But a hundred an seventy-five years ago, boys did not spend nearly so muc time in school as they do to-day. However, George Roge liked mathematics, for he knew he could apply it to su veying, and, though surveying was hard work, it wa interesting and it took you back into the frontier countr and it might lead you over the mountains into the Dar and Bloody Ground. He liked geography because ther were maps to be studied, and on the maps there wer many great areas marked 'Unexplored,' and those place excited his imagination. There were sure to be strang animals and strange people inhabiting them and rive and plains and great, bluff mountains that challenged hi to climb them so he could see what lay beyond. History he liked history because it told him how nations ha been formed and governed, how some of them had falle because of wars and luxury and corruption. It told hi of men who had become leaders, some of them militar some of them civil, and it made him see that the or could not be successful without the other. And then h began to think that here he was, living right at the tim the colonists were trying to build up a new and grea nation and there was need for just such men in Americ He used to discuss it with one of his schoolmates, Jam Madison. And Jamie said that some day he would be Governor of Virginia, and George Rogers said he woul be a military leader and go West and establish new cou ties for Virginia and protect the people from the Indian Of course James Madison little dreamed that one day h would be more than a Governor of Virginia: he was t become a President of the United States. Nor cou George Rogers Clark possibly have imagined that he wa to become one of the great military men of his time an

hat through his efforts the United States would acquire
he vast territory that now forms the States of Kentucky,
ennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri.

Above all things George Rogers loved nature study.
He learned what he could from books, but he learned
much more on his long rambles through the woods and
meadows. He trained his eyes and ears, Indian-fashion.
Dressed in his loose buckskin shirt and leggings, all be-
inged, and with his padlike moccasins on his feet, he
ould steal through the forest as noiselessly as the shadow
f the hawk drifting overhead. He could follow the deer
nd watch them as they browsed from the tender shoots
nd twigs. And he made a note of the noises they made
hat were scarcely noises at all. He watched the bucks in
he fall when they baked the velvet on their newly grown
orns until it was dry, and then he saw them scrape it off
a thorn thicket. He was surprised how white the new
ntlers were, but he understood when he saw the bucks
ain them by rubbing them against the lacerated bark
f certain trees. Then they were brown, as brown as the
uckhorn handle on the hunting-knife in his belt. He
arned to distinguish the sound a squirrel makes when it
ratches at the bark on the base of a tree from the rustle
f a quail or a grouse in the leaves round an old stump.
e learned to melt into the mottled patches of light and
hade and hold so still that a person could pass within a
w yards and not see him. He learned to know the
abits of the birds, their songs and their calls. Many
ears later, John James Audubon, the ornithologist, visited
m and in his notes referred to him as an authority on
ild life.

This was but one part of George Rogers's schooling.
erhaps equally important were the conversations he was

allowed to listen to in the evenings before an open fir
when a neighbor would drop in to discuss with Mr. Clar
the latest advices from London, or news that had com
down the coast from Boston or New York. Sometimes th
visitor would be a gentleman from Williamsburg or Rich
mond, who would talk of commerce and trade, the pric
of tobacco, or new experiments in farming. And some
times he would be a man returning from an expeditio
beyond the Alleghanies, who brought fabulous tales, an
of these George Rogers never missed a word.

But if work in the classroom was slight compared t
that of to-day, the responsibilities of manhood wer
undertaken at a much earlier age. Although a young ma
might live at home with his parents until he was married
he was expected to contribute to the household budget
That meant that he had to devise ways and means o
making money.

We have no record of how George Rogers earned hi
first pound, for at that time English money was th
currency of the Colonies. But with his great interest i
the woods and in animals, it is reasonable to believe tha
he trapped such small fur-bearing animals as the mink
the beaver, and the otter, and sold their pelts. Running
trap line was a winter occupation, for in summer a
animal's fur is thin, the hair is not well set in the skin
and is likely to come out after tanning.

With the coming of his fifteenth summer, George Roger
begged his father for a small plot of ground to work. H
thought long and hard about what he should raise, an
finally decided on tobacco. He worked faithfully tha
summer, tending his little field. When the big leaves wer
ripe, he cut them and set them on racks in the sun to dry
Then he bundled them together and hung them in the lof

THE YOUNG GEORGE ROGERS CLARK LISTENS TO TALES OF THE DARK AND BLOODY GROUND

of an old shed to cure. When his father's tobacco crop was sold, George Rogers sold his crop, too, and it was duly credited to him in his father's account book, which is still preserved.

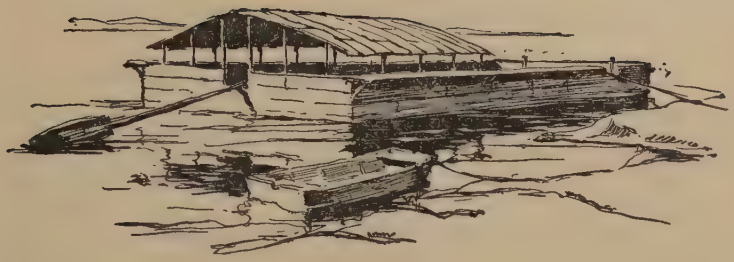
The account book kept by Mr. Clark not only shows the credit for the tobacco, but it shows charges against George Rogers for the cost of his clothing and other items that his family had bought for him. So at fifteen this young man was assuming a considerable part of his own living expenses.

The next year he felt that he could undertake two crops, corn and tobacco. Mr. Clark's account book shows that he was successful, for he is credited with almost thirty pounds sterling. Now the buying power of thirty pounds in 1768 was equivalent to about five hundred dollars to-day. How many young men of sixteen do you know who could go out and earn five hundred dollars during the summer, at farming or at any one of the many other things that we of the twentieth century have to do?

As George Rogers grew older, he joined in the social life of his community, attending dances and banquets and barbecues. And with other young men of the time he was enthusiastic about cock-fighting and shooting-matches and horse-races. 'Southern hospitality' is a well-known phrase and it was practiced with charming cordiality when George Rogers was a young man, just as it is to-day. If to-day you want to call on your uncle or your chum or your best girl, who lives thirty miles away, you jump into your automobile, and in an hour, more or less, you are there. And you come home the same day and think nothing of it. But when George Rogers made a call on friends thirty miles away, he traveled on horseback or by stagecoach, and it took him the better part of a day to

make the trip, and, of course, he was invited, and in fact went prepared, to spend a day or two. And that would be the occasion for a gathering of neighbors and a jolly party of some sort. George Rogers would remember that he had friends living thirty miles farther on, so, as he was already halfway there, he would go on instead of returning home immediately. And so it was the custom for the young men, and sometimes for whole families, to make extended tours, visiting a few days here and a few days there, enjoying themselves with parties and serious conversations and lighter gossip. Caroline County, Virginia was open and rural, and not as densely populated as much of our Eastern rural districts is to-day. But it was not a frontier county and the planters were, for the most part, well-born Englishmen who had a heritage of good breeding and social distinction.

Attendance at church was not only an obligation in the Clark household, but it was a serious and, in some ways, a social function. Mr. Clark was an extremely religious man, and he instilled into his children a sincere religious feeling that from time to time appears in their letters. In one of George Rogers's letters to his father, at a time when he had accomplished seemingly impossible feats in the West, he relates that: 'Fortune in every respect as yet hath hovered around me, as if determined to direct me. You may judge, Sir, what impression it must have on a grateful Brest whose greatest glory is to addore the Supreme director of all things.'



CHAPTER III

INTO THE DARK AND BLOODY GROUND

When George Rogers Clark was nineteen, he could no longer resist the temptation of going himself into the Dark and Bloody Ground to explore that region of which he had dreamed since boyhood.

The French and Indian War had been concluded nine years before by the Treaty of Paris, and, among other territories, the whole of the Ohio Valley had been ceded to the British. Though no organized warfare was being carried on beyond the Alleghanies, there was constant friction between the hunters and the Indians. It was a most perilous wilderness without trails or settlements. The adventurous hunters who traveled there were ever on their guard against attack. The records are full of accounts of men who set out for a day's hunting and were never heard of again.

One story of Daniel Boone is typical. He with five companions was making his first hunting trip into Kentucky. One man of the party, John Finlay, had been there several years before, and it was his stories of the country, in fact, that induced Boone to make the present expedition. For six months they had wandered through dense, luxuriant forests and then into the bluegrass region to meadows and plains carpeted with wild flowers. Never be-

fore had they seen such an abundance of game. And, to their surprise, they had encountered few Indians. In order to do better and more systematic hunting, they built themselves a crude cabin to afford them protection from the weather, but they made no attempt to conceal it. Boone, for one, had a family back across the mountains and the party planned to defray the expenses of the expedition and make something besides, by carrying back a quantity of pelts and skins.

One morning Boone set out with one of his companions, a man named Stuart, for the day's stalk. The other four men stayed at the cabin. As the two men were pushing their way through a 'heavy canebrake,' a band of Indians who had been lying in ambush, rushed upon them so unexpectedly that neither Boone nor his companion had time to raise his rifle. The Indians did them no harm, as they offered no resistance and they were marched some miles to a small encampment. Here they were well treated, the Indians sharing their food equally with them. After a few days, when they noticed that their prisoners made no attempt to escape, they somewhat relaxed their vigilance. During the night when the Indians were sleeping, though Boone and Stuart each had guards on either side, they managed, inch by inch, to creep away, even taking their rifles with them. That was a feat more remarkable than it sounds, for the Indians' ears were trained from earliest childhood to wake at the slightest sound, and these Indians were sleeping with one eye open to keep a watch on their prisoners. Had Boone and Stuart been caught, they would have been put to death instantly, for the Indians considered it a breach of the unwritten law of the forest for a prisoner, who had been well treated, even to attempt escape.

When the two finally returned to their camp, they found it ransacked and their four companions gone. Their fate was never known. A few months later Daniel Boone's brother, Squire Boone, with a hunter named Neeley, joined him and Stuart. These four decided to stay on through the winter and run trap lines. One evening Stuart failed to return to the cabin. Boone searched for him, but was unable to find him. Some years later he discovered his bones stuffed into a hollow tree. What had happened to him? Neeley was so upset by the mysterious disappearance of one of his comrades that he decided to leave Squire and Dan and work his way back to civilization. And that was the last that was heard of Neeley. He may have been killed by the Indians or captured by them and tortured. Or he may have lost his way in the trackless forest and died of an accident or possibly of starvation. Here were eight men, six in one group joined later by two others. Within eight or ten months from the time the first six set out, six of them had disappeared and one of the survivors had been captured by the Indians. The only two left were the brothers, Daniel and Squire Boone. Is it any wonder that it took courage and self-assurance for a man to undertake an expedition into the Dark and Bloody Ground?

Personal safety was not a consideration to deter George Rogers Clark; rather it added to his enjoyment, for it required him to pit his wits, his intelligence, and his knowledge of woodcraft against the cunning of the savage and the difficulties of the wilderness.

Mr. Clark's account book, under the date of April 13, 1772, bears a charge against George Rogers of seven pounds sterling for 'surveyors' instruments.' We know that very shortly after this date he set out 'with several

others' for the country beyond the ranges. He and his small party crossed the Blue Ridge, descended into the Valley of Virginia, which is now called the Shenandoah, and struck across the Alleghanies to the headwaters of the Monongahela River. Here they took canoes, which they probably made out of bark, and paddled down the river to Fort Pitt, now the site of the great industrial city of Pittsburgh.

At this time Fort Pitt was a small but vigorous frontier settlement straggling along the banks of the Monongahela. The little fort stood high on its bastions close to the water's edge and the more important trading-posts clustered about it for protection. In this town of about two hundred inhabitants was an inn, rude in its appointments but convivial in the boisterous spirit of the backwoods. Two years before, Washington visited Fort Pitt and speaks of giving an entertainment at an inn in that place. Hills of considerable height and steepness rose immediately behind the town through which wound the trail, or 'trace,' as it was then called, to Philadelphia. Nearly in front of the fort the waters of the Alleghany from the north joined the turbulent Monongahela from the south to flow westward as the great Ohio to the Mississippi. This, then, was the famous 'forks of the Ohio' mentioned again and again by the earlier explorers and hunters.

Fort Pitt was the most important settlement of the 'inner frontier,' for it was the jumping-off place for hunters, traders, and explorers going into the Ohio Valley and the western Lake Erie country; it was the place where the emigrant bade good-bye to civilization. And it was likewise important as the distributing-point for furs and skins that the hunters and trappers brought out of the wilderness.

After a few days of rest and consultation with the people of Fort Pitt, and no doubt many a discussion with the Commandant of the garrison regarding the Indians, Clark and his party set out. This is the laconic entry that one Reverend David Jones made in his journal the day of the departure: 'I left Fort Pitt on Tuesday June 9, 1772, in company with George Rogers Clark, a young gentleman from Virginia, who, with several others, inclined to make a tour of this new world. We traveled by water in a canoe, and as I laboured none, I had an opportunity of making my remarks on the many creeks which empty into the Ohio, as also of the courses of said river.'

There is little other documentary record of the journey, though the Reverend Mr. Jones does indicate that there was some anxiety felt in regard to certain Indian villages in the neighborhood when he says, 'but as they have a name for plundering canoes, we passed them quickly as possible and were so happy not to be discovered by any of them.'

Their progress down the river must have been rapid and without unusual incident. Clark was not only interested in everything he saw, but keenly observant. His boyhood training was now given an opportunity to exercise itself to the full. They passed few settlers, but George Rogers could look ahead a few years and see this vast wilderness with its stand of magnificent timber and rich black meadow lands brought under the axe and plough of the hardy husbandman. He estimated the fabulous wealth of this unopened land, not in pounds and shillings, but as to its vast resources and importance to the Colonies along the Atlantic Coast. He pictured it as a thriving granary and a great pasture for cattle and sheep. As the forests in the East were cut, the timber of the Ohio Valley would

become a valuable product. And the great highway fo this priceless stream of produce would be the river itself

The Ohio River below Pittsburgh makes a great bow t the north and then for miles flows in a southwesterly di rection. It was this country just below the bow that mad the deepest impression in the mind of Clark. It would b the first to be settled; it seemed to be the richest botto land; it would be the first to need the services of a sur veyor. George Rogers Clark could not forget this sectio of the country as he paddled on down the river.

They finally reached the mouth of the Great Kanawh River, and there landed on a spit of land called Poin Pleasant. It was here that a little more than two year later the only important battle of the Indian wars was t be fought.

Clark and his party decided on reaching Point Pleasan that they would follow the river no farther, but would ex plore the hunting grounds to the south and penetrate th forests of the Alleghanies. They set an arbitrary cours through the trackless wilderness, without supplies othe than what they could carry on their backs, and in du course again crossed the Blue Ridge and returned t Caroline County.

No sooner had George Rogers returned home than h was ready to set out again for the Dark and Blood Ground. To him it seemed indeed a paradise — or woul have seemed so had it not been for the Indians, who wer relentlessly determined that the white settlers should no take the country from them. But George Rogers was jus as determined that this obstacle should be overcome.

So, a couple of months later, we find him setting ou with his father, with the intention of settling on the bo toms below the bow of the Ohio.

DOWN THE OHIO

How long his father stayed with him we do not know, but probably until he had cleared some of the land and built his cabin.

Those first months in the wilderness were full of back-breaking toil. The land had to be cleared before any corn could be planted. As soon as a few acres had been cleared, the ground had to be ploughed by oxen. As the crop was growing, more acres were being cleared. Then there were interludes for hunting, not for sport, but for meat, because the few oxen and cows that the settlers owned could not be sacrificed for food except in an emergency.

It was not long before the stream of settlers down the river increased and George Rogers had neighbors. These newcomers appealed to him and hired him to survey the lands they were taking up. In a letter to his brother Jonathan he wrote: 'I had an offer of a very considerable sum for my place. I get a good deal of cash by surveying on this river... and drive on pretty well as to clearing, hoping by spring to get a full crop.... Corn is in some parts 7/6 pr bushel, but I have got great plenty.'

In his journeys as a surveyor Clark frequently came into friendly contact with the Indians and learned much of their character, a knowledge that later was to be of inestimable value. On numerous occasions he met the Indian Logan, 'a respectable chief of the Six Nations' who up to this time had been a staunch friend of the white man and had again and again been instrumental in keeping the Indian braves from attacking and plundering the settlers.

However, by the spring of 1774 the resentment of the Indians against the newcomers had increased to such a pitch that they were carrying on what they considered active warfare. The Indian rarely planned a whole cam-

paign, but rather satisfied himself by attacking the cabins of isolated settlers, killing all the members of a family or marching them away to a more hideous death at the torture stake. These raids and murders were a fact, but the rumors of them were exaggerated and multiplied and swept over the country like a pestilence of annoying insects. The alarm spread to such an extent that the newly arrived settlers began a mad retreat for the East. It is reported that in a single day as many as a thousand persons, with what effects they could carry, crossed the Monongahela. 'The whole country was finally stripped of its inhabitants, except they were "forted."' Young Clark was not among them.

In the early summer George Rogers was surveying some land at a place near the mouth of the Great Kanawha. Just at this time there was a considerable gathering of the outraged borderers to consider what should be done to protect themselves and their homes from the raids of the savages. Among the settlers was one Michael Cresap, a newcomer and an experienced Indian fighter. He has been undeservedly vilified by many historians as 'a man infamous for the many murders he had committed on those much injured people.' This persistent and erroneous idea has come from the much-quoted and famous speech of Chief Logan, which in respect to Cresap is untrue. We shall come to this eloquent redskin speech a bit later on.

The settlers made Cresap their leader and decided on an expedition into the Shawnee country north of the Ohio. George Rogers Clark joined them without hesitation, particularly as he had shortly before been appointed 'Captain of the Militia of Pittsburg and its Dependencies' by Lord Dunmore.

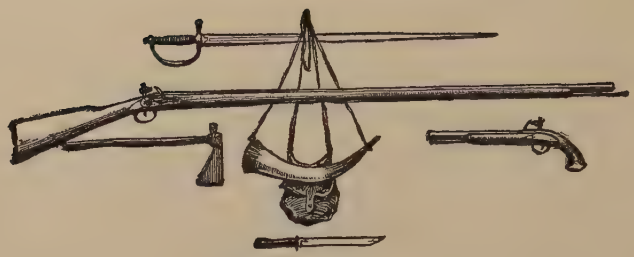
While additional men were being recruited in the vicinity of the little settlement that is to-day the site of Wheeling, an incident occurred at a trading-post forty miles up the river. It was an inexcusable atrocity that at once alienated the best friend the white man had among the Indians and precipitated one of the most gruesome of all our Indian wars.

The trader, a man by the name of Greathouse, was of the riffraff element that had settled along the river, a typical 'border ruffian.' One day a canoe load of savages approached from the farther shore on a friendly visit 'to get some rum.' This was a usual occurrence and there was no reason for Greathouse or his companions to be alarmed. However, the white men attacked the Indians and killed every last one of them. These Indians happened to be of the immediate family of Chief Logan.

Logan, naturally, was maddened by a desire for revenge. The semi-civilization that he had acquired through his contact with the white man was tossed off like a discarded buckskin shirt and he reverted to the barbarous savage, cunning and cruel, with only one desire — scalps of the palefaces. He took an oath that he would kill ten whites for every member of his family that had been murdered and that nothing less would satisfy him.

Historians differ as to how many victims fell to the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the vengeful Logan, but the number was somewhere between thirteen and thirty. When his vengeance was complete, he announced, 'Now I am satisfied for the loss of my relations, and I will sit still.'

He did 'sit still,' refusing to take further part in the bitter warfare that he had started. Nor, although he was invited, would he consent to sit at the peace council at the conclusion of the war.



CHAPTER IV

LORD DUNMORE REVENGES A MASSACRE

Lord Dunmore was at this time Governor of Virginia and shared with other far-sighted Virginians the feeling that the lands being opened up along the Ohio River should be settled and governed by the British colonists and under a colonial law. During the summer of 1774 there was a bill in the British House of Parliament that, if passed, would keep the colonists from penetrating into new country and would restore to the French inhabitants all the rights they had had prior to the cession of the territory to Great Britain by the Treaty of Paris. Not only would the French continue with their profitable fur trade but they would be protected from any competition by colonial trappers and hunters. The Virginians foresaw that this bill would be passed and they were anxious to nullify its effect by some overt act. The Indian uprising gave Lord Dunmore the desired opportunity.

It should be further understood that the various Colonies, particularly New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia each made a pretense at claiming this Western country for its own. And each was supported in its claims by old grants from the Crown or by treaties with the Indians some of them fraudulently obtained. This was a further reason why the Virginians wanted to assert themselves in

ne Ohio Valley. Also, many Virginians were financially nterested in the land companies that had been formed to xploit the new territory, and Lord Dunmore was among nem.

On July 12, Lord Dunmore ordered Colonel Andrew ewis to proceed down the Great Kanawha and across the hio into the Shawnee country east of the Scioto River. t the same time Major Angus McDonald, leading a mall body of militia, moved down the Ohio to the settlenent of the Zanes brothers at the present site of Wheelng, where he met the frontiersmen under the leadership of resap. George Rogers Clark, meanwhile, had prepared lans for a fort to be built at this point and, as they met ith the approval of Major McDonald, Fort Fincastle as soon completed.

By the end of September, Lord Dunmore himself arived at Fort Fincastle, where, much to his satisfaction, he earned the results of several raids on the Shawnee vilages. But he was determined that a more vigorous blow hould be struck in the Shawnee and Mingo districts if ny lasting lesson was to be taught. To this end he made is plans and sent part of his men down the river to the nouth of the Hockhocking River, where they built Fort ower and garrisoned it. Among the men he kept with im at Fort Fincastle were George Rogers Clark, Simon irty, Simon Kenton, and Cresap. Kenton particularly as an Indian fighter of the experience and stamp of aniel Boone and his history is a remarkable tale of darng, self-reliance, and woodcraft. He was a valuable spy or Dunmore in the present war, and at a later date when eorge Rogers Clark was in command of all the military perations in the Ohio Valley he would bring back inforation that few other frontiersmen could have obtained.

Lord Dunmore sent orders to Colonel Lewis, who was at the mouth of the Great Kanawha, to cross the Ohio and proceed again up into the Shawnee country, joining him on the march. Dunmore, in turn, was starting his expedition up the Hockhocking River, which flows into the Ohio a few miles below Fort Fincastle.

The morning following the receipt of these orders, as Colonel Lewis was preparing to set out 'about half an hour before sun-rise, two of Capt. Russell's company discovered a large party of Indians about a mile from camp. One of the two whites was shot down by the Indians. The other made his escape and brought in the intelligence; two or three minutes after, two of Capt. Shelby's men came in and confirmed the account.' The quotation purports to be from the official account of the battle.

Colonel Lewis was encamped on a narrow triangular peninsula with the Ohio on his right and the Great Kanawha on his left. In some respects it was a strategic position. However, the very able Shawnee Chief Cornstalk, gaining intelligence of Lord Dunmore's plan to have Lewis join forces with him, decided that the Indians' best chance of success was to cross over the river and defeat Lewis if possible, after which he would withdraw his forces and meet Dunmore in the north. This was a well-conceived plan of battle and quite unusual for an Indian to think out.

The official report says: 'Col. Lewis' division [this is Colonel Charles Lewis, not the officer in command] had not marched quite half a mile from camp, when about sun-rise, an attack was made on the front of his division, in a most vigorous manner, by the united tribes of Indians, Shawnees, Delawares, Mingoes, Iaways, and of several other nations, in number not less than eight hun-

dred and by many thought to be a thousand. In this heavy attack Col. Lewis received a wound which in a few hours occasioned his death, and several of his men fell on the spot; in fact, the Augusta division was forced to give way to the heavy fire of the enemy. In about a minute after the attack on Col. Lewis' division, the enemy engaged the front of Col. Fleming's division, on the Ohio; and in a short time the Colonel received two balls through his left arm, and one through his breast, and after animating the officers and soldiers, in a spirited manner, to the pursuit of victory, retired to camp.'

During the morning the Indians were gradually pushing the Virginians farther out onto the point of land, and had they been forced to take to the water they would have had no chance of escape, as Indians had been posted on the opposite banks of both rivers in the hope that this very thing would happen.

During the afternoon Colonel Lewis managed to send three companies under Captain Shelby along the Ohio bank and a flank attack forced the Indians to retreat. When night came the Indians crossed the river, taking with them their dead and wounded. But they had administered severe damage before withdrawing. Half of the officers in Colonel Lewis's force and more than fifty of the borderers had been killed, with many more wounded. The Indians are reported to have lost in killed and wounded between two hundred and two hundred and fifty.

Cornstalk led his army by a rapid march to meet Lord Dunmore, who had been ravaging the country as he progressed toward the Scioto. But the Indians were thoroughly frightened by the determination of the white man, and even Cornstalk's war-cry, 'Be strong! Be

strong!' could not hearten them. So they sent a deputation to Lord Dunmore to arrange a peace.

George Rogers Clark was present at the peace council, which Logan had refused to attend. When Clark wanted to know the reason, the reply was brought him that Logan 'was like a mad dog, his bristles had been up and had not quite fallen, but the good talk now going on might allay them.'

Though Logan would not attend, saying he was a fighter and not a councilor, he did send an interpreter to Lord Dunmore with a speech that is one of the finest and most poignant pieces of savage oratory that has been preserved to civilized man:

'I appeal to any white man to say if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not. During the course of the last long and bloody war Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites that my countrymen pointed as they passed, and said, "Logan is the friend of white men." I had even thought to have lived with you but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children.

'There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many; I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not harbor a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one!'

Cresap was among the councilors when this speech was

delivered and was angry at being unjustly accused by Logan of the murder of his family. Clark saw this and remarked to him 'that he must be a very great man, that the Indians palmed every thing that happened on his shoulders.' Cresap answered 'that he had an inclination to tomahawk Greathouse for the murder.'

The story of Logan is a tragic one. He was a great man; an Indian who understood the point of view of the whites and who realized that they would inevitably overcome the red man and settle in the valley of the Ohio. He would have spared both sides the losses of an exterminative war had he been able; had they been willing to listen to his counsel. Some years later, during the Revolution, he took up the tomahawk again as an ally of the British; and was finally murdered by them as he was returning peaceably from their headquarters at Detroit to his own country.

There are many stories about him that reveal the sort of man he was. One of them is about a white hunter who was visiting him. They sat, one morning, discussing the ability of the white man as compared to the Indian in the use of the long rifle, each maintaining that his own people were the more expert. It was a friendly argument, and finally Logan challenged the hunter to a shooting-match and the forfeit was a dollar a shot. The contest was close, but the frontiersman won five or six dollars. Logan went to his cabin and brought out an equal number of dressed deerskins, each at that time being equivalent to a dollar, and presented them to the hunter, who waved them away.

'No, Logan, I can't accept these,' he said. 'I am your guest and this has been a trial of skill, not a contest for gain.'

But Logan shook his head and smiled gravely.

'Brother, we made a fair wager to shoot our best. Logan does not forget his word. If I had shot truer than you, I should have taken your dollars. Now you must take my skins.'

Lord Dunmore finally concluded a treaty with the assembled tribes. It was agreed that the Indians were to release all prisoners they had captured and that they were to return all the horses. The whites were also to give up all prisoners, though there is some doubt that there were any left alive that had fallen into the hands of the frontiersmen. The Indians agreed to give up their lands south of the Ohio, and further that they would not cross the Ohio even for hunting; nor were they to molest any of the settlers along the river. The treaty also stipulated that the whites should not go north of the river. As an assurance of good faith, the Indians were required to give up four of their chiefs as hostages; among them was Cornstalk.

Dunmore's war had temporarily demoralized the Indians and again opened the country to the settler, in spite of the bill that had been passed by the British Parliament. The war had cost Virginia in the neighborhood of $750,000, an amount perhaps the equivalent of several million dollars to-day. But it had gone far to establish her claim to the territory and was to prove invaluable to the Americans in the Revolution.

While Dunmore was campaigning in the West, the First Continental Congress was meeting in Philadelphia and was preparing its famous memorial to King George III. It, too, took significant notice of Dunmore's effort for colonial expansion in the great valley west of the Alleghanies.

CHAPTER V

PATRICK HENRY AND THE INDIAN FIGHTER

After peace had been established, George Rogers Clark was free to return to his home below Fort Fincastle and take up again the business of farming and surveying.

In the spring of 1775 the woods rang with the axes of the frontiersmen, felling trees and building cabins on the lands from which they had fled the previous summer. Daily new settlers arrived from the region of Fort Pitt and the Monongahela, while others crossed the mountains from Virginia and Carolina and floated down the Great Kanawha in flatboats and dugout canoes.

James Harrod, a woodsman and explorer of the rank of Boone, led a party of fifty into the bluegrass region just west of the Kentucky River and laid out and built the first town in the territory. It was called Harrodsburg in honor of its founder. This was the second party that Harrod had tried to establish at this spot. The previous year, before the Indian outbreak, he had started a settlement, but the project had to be abandoned when Daniel Boone carried word to them of the coming war.

Colonel Richard Henderson, of North Carolina, had great plans for acquiring a vast amount of land in eastern 'Caintuckee,' as he called it. To that end he called to-

gether the Cherokees at Sycamore Shoals on the Watauga River. Nearly twelve hundred savages assembled, and for days, with the greatest of ceremony, with speeches by both the Indians and the whites, the deliberations were carried on. Finally a treaty was concluded whereby the Indians gave up all claim to the territory bounded by the Kentucky, Holston, Cumberland, and Ohio Rivers in exchange for a paltry shipment of merchandise that could last them only a few months. For this they were giving up a territory nearly twenty-eight thousand square miles in extent.

Colonel Henderson now ordered Daniel Boone, who, by the way, had been instrumental in concluding the treaty with the Cherokees, to take a party of hunters and axe-men and proceed from Cumberland Gap to the Kentucky River and open a road as they went. This famous old 'trace' was afterward known as the 'Wilderness Road.'

The expedition was a perilous one, but Boone and his band persisted, making the journey in a little over a month's time. They were attacked several times by the Indians, losing four men and five wounded. However, on April 18 they reached a spot well known to Boone, and there began to erect a fort and lay out a town to be called Boonesborough. It was on this very day that Paul Revere made his famous ride from Boston to warn the farmers of Concord and Lexington that the British soldiers were marching. Although the Revolution had started, the new settlers of Kentucky were not to feel the influences of the war for another year.

Henderson arrived in Boonesborough shortly after Boone had pushed through the wilderness, and he was greatly concerned to learn of the presence of 'a certain

Harrod and his men, who were settled somewhere about fifty miles west of us . . . and of whom we could form no conjecture; but thought it best to prevent any interruption to him or his men 'til we should learn what he intended with respect to us and our titles.' Thus at the very outset Henderson was to find that the title to the great territory he had acquired from the Cherokees would be questioned and contested by the Virginian settlers who were already in the country.

Henderson tried his best to establish a proprietary government. He 'simplified the laws of England' to meet the needs of the settlers and with a view to building up order and responsibility in the territory. He tried to get an authoritative recognition of his title to the land by sending an appeal to the Continental Congress to admit 'Caintuckee' as one of the Colonies. But he found opposition from the other Colonies, who also claimed the territory, and from the frontiersmen themselves, who would not recognize his right to sell them lands in the wilderness when they could have it for the taking. Colonel Henderson shortly returned to North Carolina, his dream of empire completely shattered.

At the time that Henderson was projecting his land scheme on the Kentucky River, George Rogers Clark was traveling down the Ohio as a surveyor for the Ohio Company. This company claimed land lying between the Monongahela and the Great Kanawha; it had established its claim after the French and Indian War; and it was to be settled by the Virginians who had been soldiers or officers in Governor Dinwiddie's army. Much of this land was the same as that claimed by Henderson under his treaty with the Cherokees.

Clark was drawing a salary of only eighty pounds a

year, but he was given the privilege of taking up any land he might choose in his own name. With his chief, Colonel Lee, he laid out the town of Leesburg on the Kentucky River about halfway between Boonesborough and its mouth. And here he wrote to his brother Jonathan as follows:

'We have laid out a town several miles up the Kentucky, where I intend to live and I don't doubt but there will be fifty families living in it by Christmas. . . . A richer and more beautiful country than this, I believe has never been seen in America yet. Col. Henderson is here and claims all ye country below Kentucky [River]. If his claims should be good, land may be got reasonable enough, and as good as any in the world. My father talked of seeing this land in August. I shall not advise him whether to come or not, but I am convinced if he once sees ye country, he never will rest satisfied until he gets in it to live. I am engrossing all ye land I possibly can, expecting him.'

As George Rogers Clark traveled through the length and breadth of the country, he had an opportunity of discussing the land situation with many of the settlers and found them all uncertain as to the value of their titles. Furthermore, as new settlers were pouring into the fertile territory and establishing their scattered towns and isolated farms, there was an ever-increasing need of organized government: a central authority powerful enough to appeal to in the event of dispute; powerful enough to raise an army for protection against the Indians; powerful enough to regulate the many social and political problems of communities. Such an authority was necessary if Kentucky was to become something more than a handful of 'uncultivated banditti' in the wilderness. And the necessity was immediate.

There is an interesting anecdote about Clark, told by a boy, who afterward became General Ray, whom he met near the stockaded village of Harrodsburg. We shall use his own words:

'I had come to where I now live, to turn some horses into the range. I had killed a small blue-wing duck, that was feeding in our spring, and had roasted it nicely on the brow of the hill near the house. After having taken it off to cool, I was much surprised on being suddenly accosted by a fine, soldierly-looking man, who exclaimed: "How do you do, my little fellow? What's your name? Ain't you afraid of being in the woods by yourself?" On satisfying his inquiries, I invited the traveler to partake of my duck, which he did, without leaving me a bone to pick, his appetite was so keen. "And now, my friend, what may be your name, and what has brought you to these parts?" said I. "My name is Clark," he answered, "and I have come out to see what you brave fellows are doing in Kentucky, and to lend you a helping hand, if necessary."'

Clark's intention to lend a helping hand was sincere, so in the fall of 1775 he journeyed back across the mountains to Virginia to consult with his friends and representatives of the Government to decide on a plan that would solve the land problems of Kentucky.

The Revolution had been in progress for some months and the Government of Virginia was in the hands of the Revolutionary Convention. Patrick Henry had made his famous 'Give me liberty or give me death' speech at Richmond; George Washington had been made commander-in-chief of the army by the Continental Congress; Ticonderoga had been captured by Ethan Allen and his backwoodsmen; the battle of Bunker Hill had been

fought; but the situation of the Americans seemed hopeless.

George Rogers Clark's brother Jonathan was a member of the Revolutionary Convention as were his friends, Thomas Jefferson and George Mason. Although they listened with attention to Clark's reports of the conditions in Kentucky their plans, of necessity, centered on the war along the seacoast. Clark pointed out to them that their western front was completely without protection, and that the English, from their frontier outpost of Detroit, could gather together the Indians, Iroquois, Delawares, Shawnees, Mingoes, and braves from the Lakes, who would be glad of an excuse for retaliation against the settlers along the Ohio, Alleghany, and Monongahela Rivers; and that the Indians equipped and directed by English officers could sweep across the frontier, raiding farms, destroying crops, killing cattle, in short, crippling the Continental Army by depriving them of the food supplies and men who would have to stay at their homes to render what little defense they could against the savage in his war paint. Clark begged them to take measures that would keep the Indians west of the mountains. He tried to persuade them to make Kentucky a county of Virginia and raise a militia for its protection. But all his efforts were unavailing. Though some members of the Convention realized the truth in his point of view and were further anxious to confirm Virginia's claim to this vast wilderness, yet their immediate concern was along the coast and not the western frontier.

George Rogers Clark was disappointed, but not discouraged as he traveled back to his new home on the Kentucky. During the long days on horseback he had an opportunity to work out a plan. He would call a

meeting of all the settlers to gather at one of the central forts, Harrodsburg or Boonesborough, and there they could consider four possible courses of action:

First, they might decide to throw in their lot on the side of the British in the war. This would give them immediate protection from the Indians, making allies of them, and further they would be able to draw supplies from the well-stocked British garrison at Detroit. After all, these men were British settlers and such a course had many and decided advantages.

Second, they might recall Colonel Henderson and support him in his claim to the territory. Henderson apparently had resources at his command, and if he had the whole-hearted support of the settlers of the country, he would see to it that they were equipped to protect themselves from invasion either by the British or the Indians.

Third, they could decide to make another effort to have Virginia declare them a county and thereby gain her protection and support. And Virginia had, in the past, shown more active interest in the Kentucky territory than any of the other Colonies.

Fourth, the frontiersmen could band themselves together as a political entity, deny the claims of all the Colonies to the land, by force if necessary, and apply for admission to the Colonial Confederation as an independent State.

Immediately on his return, Clark called a meeting at Harrodsburg for the 6th of June. He dispatched messengers throughout the country to tell the people 'that something would be proposed . . . that very much concerned their interest.'

A contemporary, speaking of Harrodsburg, said, 'a poor town it was in those days.' But it was much the same as

other settlements on the frontier. There was a small log fort within a stockade where the settlers could gather with their animals and belongings when attacked by the savages. Outside the stockade were rough cabins straggling down a main thoroughfare, which was either thick with dust or deep in mud, depending on the weather. Ragged, dirty children played around the doors or helped with the chores. They were not allowed to stray far from the cabins for fear of being kidnaped by the Indians. This was not an idle fear, for during this summer Daniel Boone's daughter and two of her playmates, who had taken a canoe and paddled across the river opposite Boonesborough, were captured by five Indians lying concealed at the water's edge. The girls were careless, and, having no thought for the Indians, allowed the canoe to drift close to the bank. Suddenly a red arm reached out and grabbed the bow of the canoe and tried to push it around a little bend in the river that would hide it from the fort. But the cries of the girls were heard before the Indians could overpower them and carry them away. Very few of the woodsmen were at the fort at the time, Boone himself being absent. But John Floyd, one of the men who followed the girls, tells the story himself:

'The affair happened late in the afternoon, and the spoilers left the canoe on the opposite side of the river, which prevented our getting over for some time to pursue them. Next morning by daylight we were on the track, but found they had totally prevented our following them by walking some distance apart through the thickest cane they could find. We observed their course, however, and on which side they had left their sign (one of the girls had actually broken twigs and left ravellings from her dress here and there to help guide their rescuers, just as it

would be done in the most fanciful fiction), and traveled upward of thirty miles. We then imagined they would be less cautious in traveling, and made a turn in order to cross their trace, and had gone but a few miles before we found their tracks in a buffalo path.

'Pursuing this for a distance of about ten miles, we overtook them just as they were kindling a fire to cook. Our study had been more to get the prisoners without giving their captors time to murder them after they should discover us, than to kill the Indians.

'We discovered each other nearly at the same time. Four of our party fired, and then all rushed upon them, which prevented them carrying anything away except one shot gun without any ammunition. Mr. Boone and myself had a pretty fair shot just as they began to move off. I am well convinced I shot one through. The one he shot dropped his gun; mine had none.

'The place was very thick with cane, and being so elated on recovering the three broken-hearted girls, prevented our making any further search. We sent them off without moccasins, and not one of them with so much as a knife or a tomahawk.'

This experience was unusual in its outcome, for more often the children that were taken by the Indians were never recovered or they were killed by a blow from a tomahawk or by having their heads dashed against the trunk of a tree.

So in the town of Harrodsburg the ever-alert settlers gathered to hear what George Rogers Clark had to say. The four plans were presented and thoroughly discussed by the people, Clark and John Gabriel Jones leading the debates. Some of the frontiersmen favored establishing an independent Colony immediately; the more conservative

voted to send delegates to the Revolutionary Convention, then sitting at Richmond, and make a last effort to have them grant Kentucky a county government and give them the protection they required. If this request proved fruitless, the Kentuckians could then declare themselves an independent Colony and establish a government of their own. The Continental Congress sitting in Philadelphia had not yet declared the independence of the Colonies.

Clark and Jones were duly elected as delegates to proceed to Richmond, there to present a petition to the Assembly from the 'Prime Riflemen of Kentucky.'

At this time Clark was not yet twenty-four years old. He had neither the age nor experience of many of the men he was addressing. There were James Harrod, Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton, and Benjamin Logan, men of proved ability. Yet there was something in the square-shouldered bearing, the keen, tolerant gaze of his blue eyes, in his interested and thoughtful enthusiasm, in his certain knowledge, that distinguished him from the other men and gained the trust and respect of every one he met whether white man or savage. He was by nature a leader, and no society is quicker to recognize these qualities in a man than a group surrounded by the hardships and dangers of the open.

The two delegates made all possible speed toward Richmond in the hope of reaching there before the Assembly adjourned. In this they were disappointed. After considering what they should do, it was decided that Jones should go to Holston to lend what aid he could against the Cherokees, who were on the warpath, and that Clark should proceed to Hanover, where Governor Henry lay sick. Later Jones would rejoin Clark and they would go together before the Assembly when it convened again in October.

It was not a difficult thing for Clark to gain an audience with Patrick Henry, as the latter had long been a friend and legal adviser of his caller's family and was undoubtedly acquainted with young George Rogers himself.

The young, weather-tanned pioneer presented himself at the Governor's mansion and was shown into the bedroom of the fiery old patriot. Governor Henry sat bolstered up in his high-canopied bed and extended his hand in welcome to Clark. He noted the details of the splendid figure standing erect before him; and he noted the strength and calm firmness in his grasp. At once he was interested in whatever the younger man had to say. A chair was pulled up to the bedside and Clark sat down. After a few general amenities Clark began his story. He told the Governor of the plight of the frontiersmen; the doubt as to the value of the titles to the lands they had won from the forest and the Indians; he went into detail about the natural resources of the country; he pointed out the grave danger that would threaten the Eastern States if the western frontier was not protected; he told him of the Harrodsburg meeting and the hope of the settlers that Virginia would recognize them as citizens of the State; and he implied that if the Assembly would not favor them, there was the alternative of independence.

Governor Henry listened with attention and understanding. The young delegate was right and he knew it. But the war in the East was raging, the Colonies had just declared their independence of England, and supplies had to be conserved for Washington's army. Could he, the Governor, make the people of the State sanction the sending of their precious stores into the West to protect a few scattered settlements that many considered merely a temporary experiment at best? Perhaps not, but he

would give the Kentuckians all the support he could. He thereupon wrote a letter to his Council and forwarded it to them by Clark himself.

The Council listened to him and asked him 'various questions.' He frankly told them all they wanted to know, and then asked them to send five hundred pounds of powder to Harrodsburg immediately. It is true the powder was needed badly by the frontiersmen, but it is equally true that to comply with such a request would be a tacit declaration of Virginia's intention to hold the territory against all claimants and to declare the settlers citizens of Virginia. It was a bold stroke. George Rogers Clark knew it as well as did the members of the Council. Like most governing bodies, the Council was afraid to commit itself to something for which it might be censured by the people, in spite of the fact that Clark had the support of Governor Henry.

The Council offered a compromise. They would be willing to *lend* five hundred pounds of powder to their 'friends in distress,' and they would hold Clark personally responsible. They even issued him an order on the State magazine for the powder.

He considered the proposition from every angle and decided not to accept it.

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'a country which is not worth defending, is not worth claiming. The British agents are striving with all their power to incite the reds against the Kentucky border. Already depredations have been committed. We must have defense. If you refuse to supply us with some of the necessary provisions of warfare, it will become our duty to raise an army of our own, fight our own battles, and enjoy the rewards of our labors.'

This ultimatum settled it. The Council understood.

And straightway they ordered the powder to be forwarded to Pittsburgh and there await further orders from George Rogers Clark.

Clark dispatched a letter immediately to Harrodsburg telling them of the powder and advising them to go at once to Fort Pitt and carry it down the river. How much they were in need of the powder can be realized from the fact that during this summer Benjamin Logan set out on foot from Harrodsburg to Holston, a distance of two hundred miles, to get what powder he could carry on his back to the settlement. Clark's letter was never received.

Although the Virginia Executive Council had openly declared itself in favor of Kentucky and shown its intention to defend its citizens, the two delegates had two months of bitter contest with the Assembly before they passed a bill making Kentucky a new county. But this was accomplished on December 7, 1776.

Just as Clark and Jones were ready to set out for Harrodsburg, they learned that the powder had not yet been removed from Pittsburgh. This decided them to go by that route and transport the powder themselves. It was about the middle of December when they reached Fort Pitt and the weather was bitterly cold. Indians were encamped all about the town and, though they seemed friendly, Clark was convinced that they were merely there as spies, waiting for milder weather before commencing their barbarous warfare. He was not alone in his opinion, and found it impossible to gather together a force really strong enough to transport the powder down the river with any semblance of safety. But he knew the longer he put it off, the more dangerous the situation would become.

'Sensible that our safety solely depended upon expedi-

tion,' he wrote, 'without waiting to recruit our party, we set out with seven hands only in a small vessel and by the most indefatigable labour made our way good. We passed the Indians in the night, or by some means or other got ahead of them, for, the day before we landed near Limestone, we plainly discovered that they were in pursuit of us.'

Knowing that he did not have a sufficient force to fight off the Indians if they determined on an attack, he ordered the little boat to put into the bank and had the powder carefully hidden in several different place considerable distances apart. Then the party started a rapid march overland to Harrodsburg. On the way they fell in with a small party of hunters led by John Todd, well known to Clark. Some of the men were nearly worn out with the exertions of the trip down the river, so Clark left them with Jones and Todd, while he with two companions started off to Harrodsburg for a larger party to bring in the ammunition. Without waiting for Clark to return, Todd with Jones and ten men started for the river. On Christmas Day the party was attacked by the Indians and four of them were killed, including Jones.

Not many days later, the party that set out from Harrodsburg returned with all the powder. This, indeed, bolstered up the courage of that little handful of men, who could foresee the start of one of the most ruthless wars in American history.

CHAPTER VI

THE CAPTURE AND ESCAPE OF DANIEL BOONE

During 1777, George Rogers Clark lived at Harrodsburg, and that year was a desperate one for the pioneers. Many of the newcomers of the previous summer lost heart and bundled their household goods and families back across the mountains whence they had come. The sturdy borderers who refused to leave banded together either at Harrodsburg, Boonesborough, or Logan's Fort, ready to defend themselves. Harrodsburg, for example, became a community of about one hundred and eighty people, men, women, and children, and of this number only eighty-four were men 'fit for service.'

Entries in Clark's diary give a cryptic, rather hard-bitten picture of the life of the settlers. The Indians, egged on by British officers at Detroit and also at the Illinois towns of Kaskaskia and Vincennes, were sending party after party to harass and snipe and scalp the frontiersmen. 'Thomas Shores & Wm. Ray killed at the Shawnee Spring,' is the entry in Clark's diary for March 6. Then next day: 'The Indians attempted to cut off from the fort a small party of our men. A skirmish ensued.

We had 4 men wounded and some cattle killed. We killed and scalped one Indian, and wounded several.' Ten days later he makes the following entry: 'A small party of Indians killed and scalped Hugh Wilson about 1/2 mile from the fort, near night, and escaped.'

Meanwhile there was fighting and raiding going on at the other two frontier stockades. For instance, Clark's note for April 24, reads: '40 or 50 Indians attacked Boonesborough, killed and scalped Danl Goodman, wounded Capt Boone, Capt Todd, Mr. Hite & Mr. Stoner. Indians, 'tis thought, sustained much damage.'

What a grimness there is about this concise note! Fortunately a more ample story of the affair has come down to us. Daniel Goodman and another man were working together in a field within sight of the fort. Simon Kenton, the daring scout previously mentioned and of whom we shall hear more later, was standing at the entrance to the stockade. A day or two before he had brought in news of a small band of Indians lurking in the neighborhood, but for the moment no attack was anticipated. Suddenly, while Goodman was stooping over, a redskin rushed out from behind a tree and killed him with a blow of his tomahawk and with one whistling swing of his long red knife scalped him. The whole incident took but a few seconds, but the Indian, although he thought he was out of Kenton's range, was neither far enough off nor swift enough in his movements. Kenton swung his gun to his shoulder and fired. The Indian threw his arms above his head and fell dead across his victim's body. Daniel Boone, hearing the shot, rushed out of the fort followed by the other frontiersmen, and started in pursuit of the Indians. They had only gone a little way when they found themselves surrounded. The savages were

pouring in a deadly fire from every side and Daniel Boone was the first man wounded. A bullet through his ankle brought him down, and in a moment an Indian with raised tomahawk was upon him. Boone was, for the instant, defenseless. But the Indian never reached him. Simon Kenton again had his wits about him. He had seen Boone's predicament and fired with deadly accuracy. Then, raising Boone from the ground, the two, followed by their comrades, fought their way back to the fort. That is the story that Clark compressed into twenty-seven words. In the same way, every line of his diary could be expanded if only we had the details. And we wonder what thrilling stories there were behind such laconic entries as, 'A party went out to hunt Indians. One wounded Squire Boone & escaped.' Or again, 'Indians attacked Logan's Fort, killed Wm. Hudson, wounded Burr Harrison and Jno Kennedy.' Actual knowledge of the Indians' brutality was bad enough, but worse than that was the gnawing anxiety for those who made forays from the forts and never returned. 'June 5 Harrod & Elliott went to meet Col. Bowman & Co. Glenn & Laird arrd from Cumberland. Danl Lyons, who parted with them on Green River, we suppose was killed going into Logans Fort. Jn Peters & Elisha Bathy we expect were killed coming home from Cumberland.' Think of the wives and children of these men who waited in the hazardous partial security of the forts, looking constantly and with a bitter hope toward the grasping forest that neither returned its victims nor revealed its mysteries.

In spite of the losses suffered by the frontiersmen, they were determined to have it out with the Indian as long as any remained alive to lift a rifle. You must remember that the loss of one white man was as serious to the

settlers as a loss of a hundred braves to the Indians. The Indians kept pouring in from the north and west to replace the gaps caused in their ranks by the long rifles of the white man. But there were few recruits to the settlers' forces, for there were few men of the caliber of the frontiersman left along the coast except those who were already fighting in the Continental Army under Washington.

The courage and persistence of the settlers were superb, heroic; but George Rogers Clark soon realized that by themselves they were futile, and not enough. Something must be done to put an end to the Indian raids on the settlements or they would be wiped out by tomahawk and scalping-knife. With such a bold idea in mind Clark began to turn over a plan in detail. Albert Bushnell Hart, the Harvard historian, in writing of it said: 'No story of the Arabian Nights is more romantic or improbable than Clark's conception of his plan of conquest and his success in carrying it out.'

No treaties with the Indians, even supposing they could be made, would assure peace for long while the British held the towns to the north and kept supplying the savages with powder and knives. Therefore, reasoned Clark, the British must be driven out if the Indian is to be overcome. And, furthermore, he shrewdly guessed that if the British were not driven out very soon, they would organize a campaign that would sweep down on the frontier country and into the cultivated land to the east.

Clark kept his own counsel, not even hinting of his plan to his companions at Harrodsburg. He did, however, send two men, Benn Linn and Sam Moore, to spy out the British positions at Kaskaskia. They had first gone to St. Louis, where, posing as hunters, they had disposed

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of some pelts and skins. They then dropped down the river to Kaskaskia, where they found that the British garrison was well drilled and in good military order. None of the British or French inhabitants thought that an attack by the Americans was possible. But the spies found that the British were not only stirring up the Indians against the frontiersmen, but also 'that the greatest pains were taken to inflame the minds of the French inhabitants against the Americans.' This information made Clark more eager than ever to launch a campaign against the British.

So, on October 1, he again set out across the mountains for Williamsburg to lay his plans before Governor Henry in the hope of getting assistance in the way of arms, ammunition, and men.

George Rogers Clark stopped but one day at his father's home on his way to the capital, the need for action was so pressing.

On this occasion the Governor received him with the greatest cordiality, and together they went into the details and developments along the frontier during the past year. The young Major of the Kentucky Militia recounted again the heroic struggle that the little band of determined settlers was making against all but overwhelming odds. He told his story with sincerity and directness. But it was a story that seemed doomed soon to end in black disaster.

We can imagine the testy old man, worn and harried by affairs of State, a State at war with the most powerful nation in the world, seeing resources depleted, sturdy young patriots shot down or dying of disease and hardships of the camp. He shakes his head slowly, almost despairingly.

'But what, Major Clark, can we do?'

'Do, sir? We can carry the war into their own country!'

An idea so bold and reckless was the very mirror of Patrick Henry's own youth. He chuckled at the young frontiersman's bravado and asked him to outline his proposed campaign. This Clark did clearly and briefly, as was his manner. He wanted a force of three hundred and fifty men. With these he would sail down the Ohio to its mouth, where he would disembark and march on Kaskaskia. With proper and diplomatic treatment he could gain the confidence and friendship of the French. Then he would force the Indians to come to terms with him. He had no intention of going to them with an offer of peace; they must come to him. No one understood the Indian mind better than George Rogers Clark, for he had studied it by observation and contact. But we shall discuss his methods with the red savage a bit later on.

Patrick Henry felt that Clark was right, yet the status of the War for Independence was such that he was doubtful whether he could draw supplies and men for such an undertaking. However, 'He had several private councils composed of select gentlemen,' with whom he discussed the Clark proposal. Numbered among these 'select gentlemen' were Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, and George Wythe, all of whom were old friends of George Rogers Clark. They were enthusiastic in support of the plan, but they agreed with Governor Henry that if it were to succeed it must be put into effect secretly.

Through the efforts of the Council and close friends of the Governor an act was passed by the Assembly which enabled him to take the necessary measures for the protection of Kentucky. By a subtle deception which the majority of the Assembly did not see, the Governor was

really empowered not only to defend Kentucky, but to send an expedition into the country north of the Ohio. Thus, thanks to Patrick Henry, was George Rogers Clark's first great campaign made possible, with few people knowing anything of his objective.

His close friends in the Council did everything in their power to speed his necessary arrangements. Next arose the question of who should be put in command of the expedition. Clark at this time did not desire it. But quite rightly it was given to him and he was commissioned a colonel. Before he left the capital he was given two sets of written instructions; one to show to the people authorizing him to raise an army 'to procede to Kentucky.' The other was secret and contained the plan of campaign against the British posts north of the Ohio, the plans to be subject to his discretion. He received his instructions on January 2, 1778.

During the early months of the new year, Colonel Clark was impatiently trying his best to raise recruits for the expedition. He commissioned his tried companions of the past as officers and left to several of them the responsibility of enlisting their own companies. William Harrod was appointed a 'captain to raise a company.' His old friend Leonard Helm was also appointed to raise a company. Joseph Bowman, who throughout the campaigns was second in command, was made a captain and given the responsibility of recruiting a company; and so it was with several others, Captain Smith, Captain Dillard, and Lieutenant Isaacs.

But the commander and his captains met with poor success all the way from the Holston settlements in the south to Pittsburgh in the north. Many people took it on themselves to discourage recruiting. As we have already

noted, there were two parties at Pittsburgh, the Virginians and the Pennsylvanians. The latter would not enlist in the ranks of the Virginians, and many of the Virginians themselves felt that it was folly to draw men away from the more settled districts where they were vitally needed, to send them many miles into the wilderness for the protection of a handful of settlers 'that had better be removed.' Had Clark been able to reveal to them his real objective, he would probably have encountered less objection. But this he could not do.

Clark had temporarily made his headquarters at Redstone above Pittsburgh on the Monongahela, but the longer he remained there the greater the resentment grew against his misunderstood activities. He felt that he needed a force of five hundred men to assure the success of his campaign, but by the middle of May his regiment consisted of not more than one hundred and fifty, even though at this time he had been joined by Captain Helm and Captain Bowman. Each one of the companies had suffered through desertion. However, Colonel Clark had received letters from Captain Smith, who was recruiting in the Holston Settlements, telling him that he would join him by the end of May at the Falls of the Ohio, where Louisville now stands, with a company of two hundred men.

With this prospect of reënforcements he set out about the middle of May. At Pittsburgh and Wheeling he picked up his supplies and loaded them into flatboats for the voyage down the Ohio. In addition to his three companies there was a considerable number of adventurous settlers who went with him. Many of these people knew that his professed destination was the Falls of the Ohio, and the opportunities to travel with an escort of soldiers

were so rare it more than offset the dangers that they might encounter after they arrived.

The flotilla polled and rowed its way down 'la Belle Rivière,' as it was called by the French, and it was difficult for many who had never been west of the Alleghanies before to realize that the magnificent forest and the luxuriant meadows, the parklike woods and swaying canebrakes that crept to the water's edge, could harbor a danger as terrible as the savage with tomahawk and scalping-knife. Now and then a group of men or a family or two would see a particularly enticing bit of land along the south bank and they would be put ashore with what goods they had to start their new life in this new land.

When Colonel Clark reached the mouth of the Kentucky River, he halted for a few days while he sent a message to Captain Smith to join him with his company of two hundred, at once. Word came back that Captain Smith had not arrived, that most of the company had deserted, but that Captain Dillard, the officer next in command to Smith, was coming through with a few men. This news was a bitter blow to Colonel Clark, for it left him with a total force less than two hundred strong. And he had felt that he needed at least five hundred! He knew that to go on with the undertaking was foolhardy, yet he felt that he must vindicate the trust that Patrick Henry had placed in him, for, if he were not able to gain some definite success through this expedition, his old friend and counselor would be severely criticized by his opponents at home. Even at this time Colonel Clark had not revealed his true plans to a single one of his subordinate officers.

In desperation, he resolved not to turn back on the plans that he had taken such pains in making, and ordered the boats to proceed to the Falls. Here, on May 27, they

landed on Corn Island. The island was of considerable size, about seventy acres in extent, and here the first settlement was laid out, including a stockade and small fort to house supplies and to withdraw to in the event of an attack.

Clark's spies brought in news that the Indians were even more numerous than they had been the year before and their raids were growing more frequent. Never did a hunter drop in for a word with the Commandant but he brought word of fresh atrocities. Daniel Boone, who should have been one of Clark's captains, had been captured by the Indians in February and it was not until months after that they discovered what had happened to him.

As the year 1777 drew to a close, the settlers of Boonesborough found themselves without salt, one of the few luxuries the frontiersman felt he could not deny himself for long. The trip over the mountains to the Holston Settlements was long and hazardous, and Boone did not want to take a guard strong enough to protect a pack-train laden with salt so far from the fort, as that would too seriously weaken its defenses. It was therefore decided that a party should go to Blue Lick on the Licking River not far to the east and there boil down a sufficient supply to last through the winter.

Early in January, Boone set out with twenty-seven men. For the next few weeks they worked, out in the bitter cold with primitive utensils. The salt brine cracked their hands and their sodden clothing froze to them. But the men worked on determinedly, and finally they had a sufficient supply to load a couple of pack-mules which were sent back to Boonesborough. This was not enough to last the winter out, so the party stayed on.

Boone was the scout and hunter for the party. One day in February he was out in search of game and was having poor luck because of the blizzard that was raging. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, a band of Indians rushed upon him. They came from every side and he realized instantly that he had no chance of escape. He offered no resistance and laughed with them as though it were a great joke. They recognized him immediately, for some of them had been his captors of nine years earlier. They now crowded around him and treated him as a lost brother. Chief Black Fish, who had long been known to Boone, was leading the war party. After a short conversation, he realized that the Indians were marching to attack Boonesborough, and he knew, only too well, that with nearly thirty men absent making salt the fort was not in a position to resist such a formidable party. He, therefore, casually suggested to Black Fish that his real opportunity lay in capturing the men at the Lick rather than taking the doubtful chance of a raid on the settlement.

Above all things, Boone understood the mind and temperament of the red man, and he made it appear to the Indians that he was perfectly indifferent as to what they did, but in his mind the capture of twenty-odd men, and without bloodshed, for Boone would arrange that, was a feat they could sing about and tell around their camp-fires for years to come. There probably was no white man for whom the Indians had more respect than Daniel Boone, and they actually decided to follow his suggestion. Black Fish gave him his word that if the men were taken without any resistance they would be treated humanely and be spared the torture stake. So Boone returned with the Indians to the Lick. He went forward alone and explained to the men what had happened.

After some persuasion they agreed to surrender. Thus were Boone and his whole party captured.

The prisoners were marched back to the Indian town of Chillicothe on the Scioto River, where Black Fish and his band were received with high ceremony and feasting because of their successful campaign. The great prize was, of course, Daniel Boone.

The Indians were so proud of their feat that they determined to brag a bit and show off their captives to the Indians of the neighboring villages. This they did, and finally completed the tour at Detroit. Here they presented the prisoners to Colonel Hamilton as a token of their friendship, with the exception of Boone. Boone was their prize, their ideal of a man, whether red or white, and they would not give him up. The British admired him, too, and Colonel Hamilton offered a ransom of one hundred pounds for his release, but it was refused and Boone was carried back to Chillicothe to become a blood-brother of the Chief. Subsequently he did escape and reached Boonesborough about the first of August just before the Indians, led by the British, made the most determined attack the little fort ever had to withstand.

But to return to Corn Island. Colonel Clark had been drilling his troops, explaining to them the tactics of Indian warfare and trying to whip them into shape for the coming campaign.

When he thought the moment was right, he gathered his officers and men together and revealed to them the real object of the expedition, the march against the Illinois towns. The regiment was momentarily stunned by the thought of such a daring plan. But the officers realized that if the stroke against the British outposts were successful, there would be a chance for peace through-

out this region that had never been possible. Many of the soldiers felt that they had been deliberately misled by the terms of their enlistment. This was not the defense of Kentucky; it was a campaign of conquest far into the enemy country, where they would be surrounded by many times their number of cruel, hostile savages. In the event of a defeat they could expect no support from their base, nor could they, in all probability, make a successful retreat, even into Spanish territory, as their Colonel suggested. However, these men were not cowards; they were cool, fearless, and cautious, for caution was frequently the white man's only superiority over his red enemy, and they wanted to convince themselves of some possibility of success before setting out. Finally they decided that they would follow their officers, who agreed whole-heartedly in Colonel Clark's plans.

Then an incident took place that might have proved a serious handicap to the whole enterprise and that did bring shame, dishonor, and death to one entire company out of the skeleton regiment.

Captain Dillard, you will remember, had joined Colonel Clark with a small company of men at the mouth of the Kentucky. These men had been recruited in the Holston Settlements, way to the south. They, least of all, approved their Colonel's plan. Clark knew of their dissatisfaction, for he had some of his most trusted men scattered throughout the regiment whose duty it was to keep him informed about whatever took place. He discovered in this manner that there were some men in Captain Dillard's company who were planning to desert. A fear of this very thing had, in fact, influenced Colonel Clark to take up his position on an island rather than on the mainland. He saw to it that the boats were gathered together and

well secured. In addition to the regular guards round the island, he placed special sentinels to see that no one should come near them.

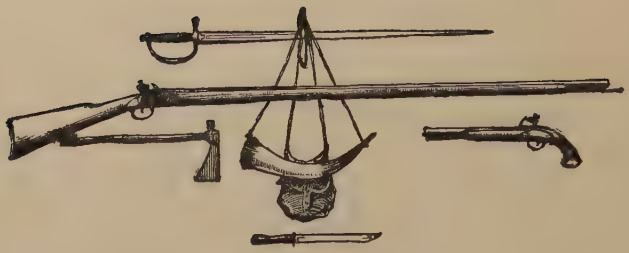
Captain Dillard saw these preparations against their escape, but as he was more shrewd than honorable he consulted with his men and a plan was evolved. When they went to the river to bathe and swim, they were to try to find the shallowest passage to the south bank and to mark it carefully for use when the proper time arrived. In this they were more than successful, for they found a place where the channel might be waded. This they reported to Dillard, who ordered the men to be ready to start shortly before daylight on the following morning. The position of the guards was known, and when they were farthest from the place where Dillard and his men were bivouacked, the little band of deserters quietly rose, picked up their guns and what equipment they could carry, and sneaked off in the darkness.

It was not until after sunrise that their absence was noticed and Colonel Clark was informed. Without a moment's hesitation he ordered a party of considerably greater number to pursue and capture them. If they resisted, they were to be shot in their tracks. It happened, fortunately, that some of the men from Harrodsburg had come to Corn Island, mounted. The deserters had no horses. Therefore, the pursuers were given all the horses on the island with instructions that those mounted were to relieve the men on foot at frequent intervals and that they were to travel at the utmost speed.

Within twenty miles the deserters were overtaken, but having discovered their pursuers before they were within rifle shot they scattered into the woods and less than ten were captured. However, the punishment of the

men who escaped was much more severe than had they fallen into the hands of Colonel Clark. Coming from the comparative civilization of the Holston, many of them were not trained woodsmen and they did not know how to take care of themselves and subsist on the wilderness. Some of them must have died of starvation or been captured by the Indians, for they were never heard of again. Others, after the extremest hardships, found their way to the settlements. Captain Dillard with four or five companions managed to reach Harrodsburg, worn out with fatigue and hunger, their clothing torn and their flesh bruised and bleeding. What joy and relief they must have felt when they pushed out of the forest into the little clearing around the fort. But their joy was premature, for when the people found out who they were, news of their desertion having preceded them, they refused to allow them to enter their houses, they refused them food and clothing, nor would they even dress their wounds. But their plight was so pitiable that finally they were given some rough attention and urged to move on.

When the posse returned to Corn Island with their few prisoners, they stuffed an old shirt and a pair of leggings with brush and grass, fashioned a neck and face from the knot of a gnarled tree limb, painted it with ashes to make it more or less white, perched a battered coonskin cap jauntily atop it, and tied the effigy upright to a stake. Brush and hay were piled around the feet of the unsuspecting dummy and amidst the jeers and gibes and solid epithets of the frontiersmen it was saluted as Captain Dillard and burned. After which what remained of this dwindling little army went back to its training, and its preparation for what has been referred to as the most amazing military campaign in American history.



CHAPTER VII

THE MARCH OF THE BIG KNIVES

The country toward which the expedition was headed, although occupied and controlled by British soldiers, was mostly inhabited by French. Clark well knew that the French hunters and trappers had no love for the British. But he also knew that they looked to the British troops for protection against the Virginians, or 'Big Knives' as they were called. The British had cunningly spread tales among them of the rapacity and barbarity of the Big Knives, who they said were far worse than the Indians. And George Rogers Clark was the chief of these Big Knives, and this very fear of the Americans Clark determined to turn to his advantage.

On the morning of June 24, 1778, before the heat of the day had set in, Corn Island settlement was agog with excitement. The boats had been dragged to the upper end of the island and a steady stream of men marched between them and the supply rooms. Powder and shot were put aboard; a quantity of food to supply the men on their voyage down the river; and a few articles of clothing. But certain things were conspicuously absent. There were no tents to protect the men from the weather; nor were there any blankets; and even most of the iron pots and cooking utensils were being left behind. There were

no cannon, no horses, no pack-animals. The soldiers themselves could not have been distinguished from the civilian settlers mingling with them. There were no bright uniforms of swagger military cut, no uniforms at all in fact, merely the rough homely clothing of the frontiersman — leather shirt, leather leggings, and the bushy, coonskin cap. But what they lacked in appearance they more than made up in bravery and determination. Colonel Clark looked on, issuing an occasional order, lending a hand here, supervising some arrangements there, above all anxious to be off.

At last everything was stowed aboard, including the men. There were four companies under the command of Captain Bowman, Captain Harrod, Captain Montgomery, and Captain Helm, respectively — about one hundred and eighty men. Colonel Clark must have smiled to himself when he remembered how imperative he had thought it was to start the expedition with five hundred! He stepped aboard his boat and gave the order for the men to bend to their oars while the little garrison that remained on the bank cheered and shouted good luck to them on their adventure.

The boats pulled steadily upstream for about a mile, in order to reach the main channel. There they swung into the swift current that carried them toward the boiling falls. As they approached the churning water, the sky began to darken, though there was not a cloud in sight. The darkness increased. It was not like the dusk of twilight and evening. It seemed as though the light were being sucked from the sky. The roar of the rapids drowned the terrified shouts that broke from the throats of the superstitious men. They turned their eyes toward the sun and saw a great shadow advancing across it.

The sun was in eclipse. By now the color of the trees, the grasses and the flowers on shore had faded, the rough boats, the men's equipment, even their hands and faces had turned to a muddy, ashlike gray. Their world was faded and ominous, and the boats tossed and swirled and shot ahead in the mad, racing waters. They were hurled forward and shaken as though the spirits of the earth and sky would crush them and cover their end in darkness. Never did a handful of men start out 'to conquer an empire' under more awesome circumstances!

The adventurers rowed on. Day and night they rowed, for success lay largely in speed. They must outrun the news of their coming. When they reached the mouth of the Tennessee River, about sixty miles above where the Ohio joins the Mississippi, Colonel Clark ordered the boats to put in to a little island where they could make final preparations for the overland march to Kaskaskia.

Scouts were sent out to reconnoiter and bring word of any Indians in the vicinity. While the others were still busy setting up camp, two scouts returned with an unknown white man who gave his name as John Duff. He said he had been leading a party of hunters up the river. When this mysterious wanderer was taken before Colonel Clark, he told his story and said his party had put out from the British post at Kaskaskia eight days before on a mere hunting expedition and that no one at Kaskaskia dreamed of an attack by the Americans. However, the British were by no means asleep and of course kept spies along the Mississippi. Colonel Clark, suspecting this, had for this very reason landed above the Mississippi with the intention of marching overland against the fort. Duff, although not particularly talkative, did inform Colonel Clark that there were some eight hundred French

inhabitants at Kaskaskia who would take up arms and join the British garrison. He said the French would do this because they had been led to believe that their women and children would be the victims of the most terrible atrocities if they ever fell into the hands of Clark and his blood-thirsty Big Knives. As to the British garrison, it would be able to give a good account of itself unless taken by surprise. This was substantially the same news Clark had received from the spies he had sent out the previous year.

Duff apparently gave honest answers to all of Colonel Clark's questions, and then even asked if he and his companions might be allowed to join the expedition. Clark then had Duff's entire party brought before him. They all seemed sincere in the interest of the Big Knives, and the Colonel naturally was glad to add all the able-bodied men possible to his little army. But before he permitted them to remain he told them how they should talk in the presence of his soldiers and just how much information they should pass on to his men. They apparently did their work well, for when the column got under way the next morning every one was in high spirits and eager for the march.

First they dropped down the river for about ten miles to an abandoned French outpost called Fort Massac. Here they dragged their boats ashore and carefully hid them in the cane and brush, in the hope that they would be safe from the prying eyes of Indians or any passing hunters.

Clark's little army did not function quite as you might expect an army to. It was not formed in squads and platoons with the officers marching ahead. Instead the men were scattered out so that each might pick his own

path through the swamps and marshlands of southern Illinois. There was an excellent reason for this because it meant that little evidence would be left by the soldiers to show that they had passed. If they had formed a narrow column for the march, they would have beaten down a path that any chance woodsman would have recognized had he stumbled across it in the dark. Flung far out ahead and on the wings were scouts to give notice of any roving bands of Indians or hunting parties that might dash to Kaskaskia with the news and thus prevent a surprise attack by Clark's Big Knives.

The first fifty miles of their one-hundred-and-twenty-mile journey was an exhausting and heroic effort. When the men were not wading through the sloughs and sticky marshes, they were breaking their way through tangled thickets. Their food was scanty, for game was scarce; the water was bad, and some of the men came down with fever. Their fatigue after the day's march was nearly more than they could bear. But their indomitable leader, by word and example, inspired them to push on.

On the third day of the march the country grew better. From the edge of the dark and clinging forest they looked out on wide prairies and waving meadows dotted here and there with groves of maple, oak, and walnut. But now their caution had to be redoubled, for just as they could see a great distance, so could they be seen.

One of the hunters who, along with John Duff, had joined Clark at his camp on the Tennessee, was acting as chief guide. John Saunders was his name. They had not gone far across the open country before Colonel Clark noticed that this man John Saunders was acting queerly. On being questioned the man said he was lost. This news passed from man to man, like a grass fire running before

the wind and immediately produced 'the greatest confusion.' Clark, of course, was angry and suspected that the man was trying to mislead them. It is easy to imagine what must have been the feeling of the troops and their officers. Here were less than two hundred men, without supplies and ammunition except for what they each carried, in the midst of a country filled with hostile Indians who far outnumbered them. If these Indians even so much as caught sight of them, word would soon get to Kaskaskia and the chance of its capture would be entirely gone and the Big Knives would be ambushed and fall victims to French and British rifles or the Indian torture stake.

Saunders begged that he be allowed to go a little way ahead and reconnoiter. This Colonel Clark agreed to let him do, but took the precaution of sending a couple of men along and warned him that if he did not find the way shortly, he would be put to death without hesitation. After a couple of hours' search, Saunders returned and reported that he had found the Hunters' Road. Apparently he had been honestly confused. At any rate, he was able to convince the Colonel and his men of his sincerity and eagerness to lead them right.

The following day their scant supply of food gave out. No game was seen near by and to send out a hunting party was considered inadvisable on the grounds that it might double the chances of the discovery of the whole party. There was nothing to do but push ahead on empty stomachs.

From the point where they had left the junction of the Tennessee and Ohio Rivers to Kaskaskia was, as we have noted, about one hundred and twenty miles. And the march was made in six days, an average of twenty miles

a day. Of this the first fifty miles through the low lands consumed half the time. So on the last two days of the march they must have traveled between fifty and sixty miles. Truly these were sturdy men who could make thirty miles a day, every moment on the alert, with only water to sustain them.

On the evening of July 4, 1778, the frontiersmen reached the Kaskaskia River about three miles above the town. There they halted until dark so their movements might not be noticed by possible enemy guards or outposts on the opposite bank.

The Commandant of the British garrison happened to be Colonel Rocheblave, a Frenchman. For a number of years he had served as a mercenary soldier in the British army. He hated the Americans, and he also hated the Spanish. Then, too, the British had promised him that if New Orleans were ever captured he would be made its first British governor. He knew the Spanish had been aiding the Americans by sending them supplies up the Mississippi. He also was astute enough to realize that some day he was pretty sure to be attacked by an American army. So he wrote various letters to headquarters in Canada begging that supplies and men be sent him, sufficient to hold the Mississippi Valley. In one of his letters he said: 'We are upon the eve of seeing here a numerous horde of brigands who will establish a chain of communications which will not be easy to break, once formed.' How prophetically he spoke, his superiors did not realize.

Probably even Rocheblave did not fully appreciate the determined spirit of the men marching against him. There they sat concealed in the high grass behind a fringe of trees close to the water's edge, worn out and hungry. But as Captain Bowman, one of Clark's Big Knives,

expressed it later in a letter to an uncle in Virginia, 'We were all determined to take the town, or die in the attempt.'

A little while after dark Clark decided his moment to strike had come. Scouts had brought word that Kaskaskia was quiet. Here and there were lights, but one after another they were winking out. There was no activity at the fort. At one end of the town there was music and singing. The negroes and creoles were having a dance. This was the only sound that broke the stillness of the night. The word of command from Clark was passed from man to man. They rose as stealthily as Indians with their rifles ready.

Just across from the town stood a farmhouse. The first move was to surround it quietly and seize the terrified occupants, who were immediately taken before the rough-looking chief of the Big Knives, Colonel Clark. The farmer and family were so startled that it is no wonder that some of their information 'seemed to vary.' The Americans were informed that a couple of days before there had been an alarm and that most of the men had been under arms, but spies had been unable to find any trace of an approaching enemy force. So Kaskaskia had quieted down to normal again. There were a great many men in the town, said the farmer, but most of the Indians were camped at Cahokia, sixty miles away.

Clark's next move was quickly to divide his men into three units, and instruct two of them to proceed to the far end of town. His own unit he intended leading directly to the fort, and at a given signal the others were to rush upon the town and storm it.

Luckily enough boats were found on the south bank to transport all the men across at once. The rowlocks were

wrapped with rags and skins to keep them from squeaking and the oarsmen dipped their oars so that not so much as a lone splash was heard. The men landed and silently marched to the positions determined upon. Colonel Clark, with John Saunders still as his guide, led his unit toward the main gate of the fort. The moccasined feet of the marching men made no sound to warn the sentinel. They found the gate open, and before the sentry had time to cry out he was disarmed and gagged. Then Clark and his men crept into the fort, still without a sound. Saunders led the way to Rocheblave's house. It was surrounded, and then the Colonel forced an entrance and found the redoubtable Commandant in nightshirt and nightcap coming out of his bedroom door to see what all the noise was about. Imagine his surprise and chagrin when Colonel Clark, travel-worn and haggard, announced that he was the prisoner of the Big Knives and that the town was already in the hands of an American force. Rocheblave was allowed to dress, and when he appeared a few minutes later, in the street between two soldiers, the troops burst into a shout of triumph.

This was the signal that the other two units had been waiting for. With a wild yell they rushed the town and seized every person who happened to be about. Those of Clark's men who could speak French then ran through the streets informing the inhabitants that the town had fallen into the hands of the Big Knives and that any person who so much as dared to stick his nose out of a window would be shot without a second's hesitation. But the work of the weary soldiers was not done. Colonel Clark ordered them to split up into small parties and patrol the streets, shouting and singing, and making as much noise as an Indian tribe in the midst of a massacre. Further, they were to go

to each house and demand guns, powder, and shot. But they were not to harm so much as a hair of any one's head. The young Colonel was determined that in appearance, at least, he would substantiate the Frenchmen's opinion of the Big Knives, and then by a show of leniency later he hoped he could win their gratitude and genuine friendship. A careful guard was maintained around the town to prevent any one escaping to give the alarm to the neighboring villages and thus bring a rescuing force down upon them.

One of the first things Clark did was to send Simon Kenton with a couple of companions to spy out the country around Vincennes and to determine the strength and condition of the garrison there. The scouts started out that very night. Clark next turned his attention to interviewing some of the principal inhabitants. One after another they were called from their houses and taken in terror before the Big Knife. In general he found that the people were not overly fond of the British, and this encouraged him to believe that it might be possible to make them feel friendly to the Americans. There were even a few among them who declared that they really were not French or British, but were American hunters. Two of these, Richard Winston and Daniel Murry, immediately set out to procure food supplies for the victorious raiders, and by morning had the finest meal prepared that Kaskaskia could produce. This proved a joy to the famished soldiers. 'After the troops had regaled themselves, they were withdrawn from within the town and posted in different positions on the borders of it.'

George Rogers Clark had taken and subdued the key position in Illinois without a gun being fired, without a single blow of the tomahawk or scalping-knife, and with a band numbering less than a quarter of those he had at-

tacked. It was a masterful stroke; it was consummate strategy. Now strategy must make these people his friends or his position so far from his base and reënforcements might become a fatal trap.

He issued orders to the people that they were at liberty to move about their town, but that no one should venture beyond its borders. This brought a general exodus from the houses and the people gathered in little knots, and in hurried whispers, with frightened glances, they expressed wonder and anxiety as to their probable fate. The young Colonel must have smiled as he looked out on them from his headquarters and issued an order that certain of the more important militia officers be arrested and put in irons. No reason was given to the people for the arrests; no explanation was given to the prisoners. 'The worst was now expected by the whole.'

The people of Kaskaskia were not his only concern. There were the towns to the north to be taken before they could prepare for a defense. Therefore, Colonel Clark ordered Captain Bowman to take thirty men and mount them on horses found in the town and proceed with the greatest haste toward St. Philippe, Prairie du Rocher, and Cahokia. The first two towns were merely trading-posts without military protection, but Cahokia had a small fort and a British Commandant.

When the people of Kaskaskia realized what Captain Bowman was about, some of the Frenchmen went to Colonel Clark and begged that they be allowed to accompany him, explaining that the people of these towns were their friends and relatives. Their idea obviously was to urge these 'friends and relatives' to submit with good grace lest they be torn to pieces by the Big Knives; that Captain Bowman's troop was an insignificant detachment

of a much larger force that would march upon them from Kaskaskia if they showed any resistance. The Colonel, seeing the advantage of having these men accompany his expedition, gave his permission, and about noon of the 5th of July, Captain Bowman set out for Cahokia.

In the mean time the Catholic priest, Father Gibault, with several of the oldest and most responsible members of the town, asked permission to speak to Colonel Clark. They were shown to the door of a dimly lighted room, fear deepening the lines of their creased, old faces. The sight that met their eyes was worse than they could have anticipated; it left no doubt in their minds of the hideous barbarity of the Big Knives. Gathered about a table, rough-hewn from a solid log, sat four or five men practically naked. Their bodies were scarred and bleeding; their eyes seemed to glare out of their sockets from drawn, cadaverous faces partly hid by a ten days' growth of beard. On the table lay tomahawks and scalping-knives and one man was inspecting the flint of the rifle he held across his knees. The faint sunlight that crept in through one dingy little window accentuated the somber shadows and made the general gloom more ominous. Is it any wonder that the delegation was, for some moments, speechless? They did not know that the new Commandant and his officers had been bathing in the river and that they had left their clothing spread out upon the bank to dry while they returned to the fort to dress the cuts and scratches they had received during their march from the Ohio.

Finally Father Gibault summoned enough courage to ask which was Colonel Clark. The Colonel made himself known and asked the men to sit down, but they preferred to stand near the door so that in case of necessity they could flee from the savages before them. Again they

seemed speechless. Finally Colonel Clark asked them, rather gruffly, what they wanted. Father Gibault told him that the people realized they must suffer the hardships of war; that they would soon be separated one from another, and through him they begged that they might be allowed to gather in the little church to say their farewells.

Colonel Clark shrugged his shoulders and said he had nothing to do with the church. If they wanted to gather there, they could do so and stay as long as they liked. He told Father Gibault, however, that he had better warn the people not to attempt to leave the town, and with a gesture indicated the dire consequences that would result from such rashness. The Colonel then dismissed them by saying he was not at leisure.

George Rogers Clark had a sense of humor and a sense of the dramatic and both qualities contributed to his success. He was a keen student of men, and he knew how to make his points impressive. His seemingly harsh treatment of the people of Kaskaskia came not from any viciousness in his character, nor from any actual intention of doing them any harm. It was merely necessary from the standpoint of the safety of his little army and the success of his undertaking. He himself wrote: 'My principle would not suffer me to distress such a number of people, except, through policy, it was necessary.'

Very soon, from every direction, the people were seen gathering at the church. Mothers carried their babies, young children were led by the hand, the old and infirm who could scarcely hobble were helped along, sweethearts walked tearfully side by side, the stalwart young *coureurs de bois* were stooped and dejected. Solemnly they crowded into the church and the doors were closed. The town seemed deserted except for the dogs that lay in the

dusty roads sunning themselves and the gaunt, weather-bitten soldiers who leaned like brown-stained statues on their long rifles, silent men keeping watch over a silent village.

After a time the door of the church swung open and Father Gibault came out, followed by a group of bearded patriarchs. They walked toward the fort speaking in furtive undertones among themselves, punctuating their remarks with gestures of hopelessness and despair. They begged to see Colonel Clark and were immediately admitted.

This time the scene at headquarters was entirely changed. Colonel Clark stood beside the long table fully dressed in the costume of the frontiersman, which suited his broad, erect shoulders and gave him as much added dignity as any tailored uniform. His sword hung at his side and across his shoulder was slung the ever-present powder-horn and shot-pouch. His face was clean-shaven and his unruly sandy hair was brushed back from his forehead. Never did a young man look more impressively a soldier and a leader.

Father Gibault began by thanking the Colonel in the name of the people for his indulgence in allowing them to gather at the church. Then he asked that he might be allowed to say a few words in behalf of his people. Colonel Clark told him to speak out whatever he had to say. So with great hesitation Father Gibault explained that since theirs was the fate of war they were reconciled to their lot. Their property and goods, they knew, belonged to their conquerors; their homes were in the hands of the enemy, and when they were driven forth they had little expectation of returning. They would be sold into slavery, it was the fortune of war; but would not the good commander

try to prevent them from being separated from their families? They knew well what had happened to the Frenchmen of Acadia; how wives and husbands had been torn from each other, how children had been taken from parents, how lovers had been separated, never to meet again. And could the good commander be generous enough to let the women and the little children keep some of their clothing; they were not so hardy as the men and their suffering would be more severe? And could they be allowed a small quantity of food for the women and children, enough to tide them along until the men, through their industry, could again support them? It was true that their conduct had been influenced by the British Commandants and the emissaries who had been among them, and it was true that they had been made to take the oath of allegiance to King George and these they had been bound to obey. In their distant outpost they had had little opportunity to learn about the war in the East, but there had been some Americans among them, from time to time, and on more than one occasion Father Gibault had heard the Frenchmen express sympathy for the American cause. But, above all, could the good commander show a little leniency toward the women and children?

Colonel Clark had listened to the priest's simple appeal without giving a sign as to the effect it was having upon him. He now turned and, with head bent, paced back and forth before the table. He was convinced of their sincerity. This was the moment he had waited for.

Suddenly he stopped and raised his head. He acted as though he were insulted and his deep voice fairly boomed at them. Did the people of Kaskaskia think that he and the Americans were savages? Obviously they did or they would never have spoken as they had. What sort of men

were these Big Knives to make war on women and children, to strip them of their clothing, to turn them out of their homes into the wilderness, to take the bread out of their mouths? Did they think they were brothers of the painted savages that would revel in the horrors of the torture stake? It was only too clear that they had listened to the lies that had been told them by the British and they had believed them. Bah! It was because of these lies and because the British and the Frenchmen, too, were stirring up the Indians and supplying them with powder and guns and scalping-knives to use against the settlers from Virginia that the Big Knives had determined to come to Illinois and put a stop to it. The Big Knives did not want plunder. What they wanted was peace and they were going to have it, even if it meant the extermination of the Indians and their white supporters. Did they know that the French King had taken the side of the Americans and was sending men and ships and supplies to help the armies in the East? Apparently they did not. Did they know that this meant the war would soon be over and their land would come under the rule of the Americans and they would have all the privileges of free people? Why hadn't they been told these things? They were free men to go to their church and worship as they saw fit. One of the foundation principles of the Americans was that of religious freedom. The Big Knives would not molest their church; in fact, they would straightway punish any one who dared to offer it an insult. Now the Big Knives offered them liberty and freedom. If they preferred the British masters, they were free to take their families and their property and go to live among the British. The Big Knives would not take their property away from them or destroy their families, whichever choice they made.

Then Colonel Clark told them that they should go back to their weeping families and tell them that they might go about their business as usual and choose whether or not they wanted to take the oath of allegiance to America and to its Congress. He would give immediate orders that their friends in prison should be released and that the soldiers patrolling the town should be withdrawn. Later he would issue a proclamation which they should read and obey, but this would not proscribe them in living their lives in freedom.

The little delegation was struck dumb with surprise. Could they believe what the Big Knife had told them? They weren't to have their property taken from them; they weren't to be separated from their families and sold into slavery! Father Gibault tried to stammer a few words of gratitude, but his emotions were too strong. They bowed awkwardly to the Colonel and withdrew.

Once outside the fort, these men who a few moments before had approached it with abject resignation now lost all semblance of dignity. They jumped in the air for joy and set off at a run for the church. A few minutes later bells were ringing madly and the people were rushing out of doors singing and weeping and shouting and embracing one another. They paraded the streets crying the praises of the good Commandant and his chivalrous Big Knives from Virginia. They were not conquered people; they were freemen and they too wanted to become Americans.

Thus did George Rogers Clark, a young man of twenty-six, in one dramatic and effective stroke win the friendship and support of the inhabitants of Kaskaskia, and lay a foundation that was to make possible the taking of the rest of the British forts in this vast wilderness country, without so much as firing a single rifle.

Captain Bowman's expedition to Cahokia met with like success. Late in the afternoon of the 6th, having taken the little posts of Prairie du Rocher and St. Philippe without opposition, he rode into the outskirts of Cahokia. As he approached the town, he took prisoner every one he met. So his arrival was a complete surprise to the astonished inhabitants. He led his troop right to the house of the Commandant and demanded the surrender of the town. Then he offered to administer the oath of allegiance to the people. These, however, hesitated, and asked that they be allowed to wait a day before giving their answer. Bowman, of course, granted their request. The town of Cahokia had a population of about four hundred persons, most of them hunters well experienced in handling arms, and here had come among them one of the dreaded Big Knives with a party of thirty men demanding that they surrender. The Americans were outnumbered nearly fifteen to one; what chance had they if the townspeople decided to fight it out? There is no doubt that the good offices of the Frenchmen from Kaskaskia were responsible for turning a precarious situation into a bloodless victory for the Big Knives. They labored hard in the interests of the Americans, and on the next day more than a hundred of the men came to Captain Bowman and swore allegiance to the American cause.

At Colonel Clark's direction, Captain Bowman established a civil court to regulate the affairs of the people. He explained that according to the American idea the people were to govern themselves; that the military was merely to protect them and their property and to preserve order. He arranged for an election of magistrates and left it to the people to choose whomsoever they would. Much to his surprise, when the ballots were counted, he found that he

himself had been elected to preside over the court. So, at once, Captain Bowman became not only the protector of their lives and property, but judge and arbiter in their disputes. Never before had these simple French hunters enjoyed such freedom from oppression or found such honesty in their masters. Indeed, they scarcely felt the Americans were their masters; they were their brothers.

Colonel Clark conducted the affairs of Kaskaskia in similar fashion and with equal success. As he had hoped, he found the Frenchmen were carrying word out among the Indians that the Big Knives were no longer their enemies, and the sooner they asked for peace the better it would be for them. Clark had deliberately ignored the Indians, having determined on a policy that he felt would bring more lasting success than the usual presents made by the white man.

The last post of importance in the Ohio territory, and perhaps the most important, was Vincennes, Colonel Clark's next objective. It was to this town that he had sent Simon Kenton on the night of his arrival at Kaskaskia.

Kenton returned in due course and reported to his chief that Governor Abbott, the Commandant of the fort, had recently left it to make a journey to Detroit; that the fort was not in good repair and that the soldiers the Commandant had left there were an ill-sorted and ill-disciplined lot. There were a great many Indians in the vicinity that were hostile to the Big Knives, and it was with them that the greatest danger lay. The French, as in Kaskaskia and Cahokia, were not overly fond of the British, but the exaggerated stories about the Big Knives made the British seem preferable to the Americans.

Colonel Clark had many times intimated to the Kaskaskians that he had a large army waiting his commands at

the Falls of the Ohio. The true weakness of his army made this deception necessary. When he decided to take Vincennes, he let his plan become known among the people of Kaskaskia, and the news was deliberately allowed to leak out that he was going to send to his base for sufficient reenforcements to overcome any resistance he might find at Vincennes.

Everything worked out as he had hoped it would. Father Gibault, on hearing the news of the planned attack, went to Colonel Clark and begged that he might be permitted to go in advance of the army and explain to the people many things that they did not understand regarding the Big Knives. He could tell them just what had happened to the people of Kaskaskia and how they had benefited by the coming of the Americans. He could tell them that the French King had joined the Americans, which they did not know, and that the war would soon be over. And, further, he could carry word to the Indians that would have much more effect on them than the sight of an army. He also asked Colonel Clark to allow him to take as his companion on the journey another Kaskaskian, Dr. Laffont by name.

Nothing could have suited the Commandant better. On the 14th of July the party set out. They arrived safely at Vincennes a few days later, and were welcomed by their friends. Father Gibault and Dr. Laffont lost no time in telling of the unexpected benefits that had come to them with the arrival of the Big Knives. In fact, they told and retold the story of the taking of Kaskaskia and the subsequent good treatment of the people, and the story improved with each telling. The priest and the good doctor in the course of two days had so enthralled the people of Vincennes that they all marched to the church, 'where the

oath of allegiance was administered to them in the most solemn manner.'

They were now Americans, and the British flag flying from their fort could no longer be tolerated. Therefore, they elected a captain from one of the militia officers, Captain Bosseron, and proceeded to the fort in a howling body, where they demanded that the few British soldiers surrender. There was nothing for it but to turn the fort over to the French, and in less than five minutes the British ensign had been run down and the American flag unfurled.

About the first of August, Father Gibault and Dr. Laffont returned to Kaskaskia with a deputation of citizens from Vincennes with the news that it had thrown in its lot with the Americans and that already a company of militia was being formed to augment Colonel Clark's forces in Illinois. Thus all the British outposts had been 'taken' by the American forces in one of the most daring and completely bloodless campaigns in history. But George Rogers Clark's work was only half done. If he were to hold this country, he must win over the hostile savages and counteract the British influence that was stronger among them than it had been with the French.

Clark knew that an American officer was needed to command the garrison at Vincennes. But he had to be something more than merely an officer in command of the fort; he had to be a man who could help him in carrying out his plan of dealing with the Indians. Such a man was Captain Leonard Helm, whom he dispatched to Vincennes within a few days after the return of Father Gibault with the title of 'Agent for Indian Affairs for the Department of the Wabash.' On his arrival he 'was received with acclamation by the people.'

It was just at this time that the enlistment of the men in Clark's army expired, and many of them, having served their term of three months, were anxious to return to the Falls of the Ohio to be discharged. Colonel Clark persuaded many of them to reënlist for eight months' further service. The rest he sent back under the command of Captain William Lynn. Captain Montgomery returned with him bearing dispatches from Governor Henry, containing a full account of the campaign, and with the urgent request that more men be sent to his assistance at the earliest moment, and that some able man be selected to take charge of the civil affairs of the new territory. Colonel Rocheblave, the defeated Commandant of the fort at Kaskaskia, was also taken back to Virginia as a prisoner.

These were the circumstances under which Colonel Clark began his negotiations with the Indians. His army had been depleted by expiring enlistments; his officers were scattered through the country; the news of his successes had reached the British and they were planning a counter-attack. Not only did he have to keep the people of the Illinois towns deceived regarding his military force, but he had to establish and administer a civil government. Many men would have turned back before such obstacles and been justified in so doing, but not George Rogers Clark. He was determined to try his hand with the Indians, not with presents and promises, but with a haughty disdain that was little less than a threat.

CHAPTER VIII

NOBLE RED MAN OR COWARDLY SAVAGE?

NEARLY all the chronicles left by our pioneer forefathers give the Indian a pretty bad reputation. Nor is it an unfair reputation. In fact, it is quite justified because of his savagery and his demonlike cruelty. The early American frontiersmen learned all about this in open warfare and secret attack and massacre. But we should keep in mind that the reputation of the red man has been passed down to us from the pens of his bitterest enemies, and therefore we have had only half the story. So it is worth while to have a closer look at the life and motives of the 'noble red man' or the 'cowardly savage,' as he was indiscriminately called, and see what qualities his enemies and his sentimental friends have overlooked. George Rogers Clark was one of the few men of his time who did understand the Indian, and it was because of this that he met with such signal success in his dealings with them.

In the first place, the Indian was a human being like the rest of us. And it should not be forgotten that in the advancement of civilization and social development, he

ranks high among the races of the earth. He was in what scientists term the transition stage. That is, he was advancing from a nomad to a pastoral type. From a mere wanderer he was progressing to the stage of a man, with established towns and crops. Of course, there were some tribes and nations that were more advanced than others, but the Indians of eastern America, the ones we are chiefly concerned with, were not rude savages devoid of arts and culture. They were people who were rapidly developing a primitive but settled form of civilization. It has even been said that some of the principles set forth in the Constitution of the United States came from a study of the confederation of the Iroquois Indian tribes.

The Indian like the white man had the same essential feelings and emotions; love, hate, fear, courage, honor, dishonesty, friendship, enmity, generosity, envy, and so on. But with the Indian, these traits both good and bad were less restrained, for unlike the white man they were less concealed by the veneer of what we call civilization. The Indian had abundant poise, but not the restraint and consideration of others that comes through scores and scores of generations of living in a closely knit society. He was an individualist. He was self-centered and resourceful. Grudgingly and only to a small extent did he acknowledge even the authority of his chief. The many laws and regulations of the white man were utterly foreign to his method of thought. They were petty and stupid inconveniences, he felt, put in his way to annoy him. So he waved them aside without a thought — whereupon the white man called him lawless.

He was fiendishly, deliberately, intelligently cruel. Although we cannot condone this quality, we can, at least, understand it when we consider the circumstances of his

life. From the time he was first able to toddle, he was taught that to show pain was a weakness that deserved only ridicule. If he bumped his head, burned his hand, or cut himself and did not laugh, he was immediately laughed at by his friends, who scornfully pointed him out as a weakling. When he was a little older, he played at being a warrior, where the object of the game was to make the other fellow cry 'enough!' They naturally imitated the war parties of their elders returning with captives whom they tied to the torture stake, that they might work every imaginable cruelty on them in an effort to make them cry out. Usually, before the torture began, the prisoners were forced to run the gauntlet, which afforded much amusement for the women and boys who were too young to go on the warpath. They were drawn up in two lines and the prisoner was released by his captors and made to run between them. Armed with clubs and whips and stones, they pounded and belabored their victim as he ran. If possible, they knocked him down, and when he would try to rise, they pelted him with stones or threw sand in his eyes. Possibly some experienced old squaw had prepared herself for the sport by heating a pot of water which she threw onto the naked body of the poor fellow. All this struck the Indian as highly amusing. It is reported that Simon Kenton was forced to run the gauntlet eight times. Another white man, whom the Indians intended to take into their tribe instead of torturing and killing, ran the gauntlet as a sort of ceremony of welcome on being brought to the Indian village. He was so badly injured in the process that the Indians carried him many miles to a doctor at a British outpost, under whose care he finally recovered. Then the Indians returned for their prisoner and proceeded to adopt him into their tribe. This was

sport for sport's sake. It was deliberately cruel, but it was just what every brave was prepared to meet if he was so careless or unlucky as to fall into the hands of the enemy. It was a contest between captor and captive to see if the one could make the other weaken and cry for mercy. There are numerous cases on record where the tortured victim laughed in the faces of his tormentors, calling them rank amateurs at inflicting pain and urging them to try something on him that was new, something that would really disturb him. Every Indian boy was trained to these standards of hardship and self-control. Is it any wonder, then, that the Indian thought the white man a weakling and coward when he cried out in agony at the torture stake? Cruelty was a religion with them. Pain they would scoff at; and torture was a fine art.

We have every right to condemn such ruthless cruelty, but in fairness to them we should remember that they were not the pious and vicious breed that hanged and tortured innocent women during the witchcraft delusion in Salem and claimed the benediction of a just God for their acts. It was not the Indians who went out with dogs to hunt down the negroes, men or women, frequently innocent of any wrongdoing, to tar and feather them or to lynch them. The white man, when stirred by religious or political fanaticism, can be more viciously cruel than the honestly deliberate savage. This unconquerable, inborn tendency, however, was one of the primary reasons why the Indian had to go when the white man came.

Perhaps the second most conspicuous trait of the Indian, one we have already mentioned, was his independence of others; his individualism. This, too, was his natural heritage and one he could not possibly overcome without changing his whole method of life and his surround-

ings. Had civilization come to him slowly, had social evolution been allowed its hundreds of generations to grow in his mind, there is little doubt but that he would have developed a civilization as little different from ours as the Chinese. But the sturdy pioneer could not wait for evolution to take its course.

The very food he ate made him an individualist. For the most part he lived on game, and the only way he could get it was to stalk it with cunning and skill. Also, in the dense forests and canebrakes of the Ohio Valley one man could hunt by himself far more successfully than could several together. There were, of course, exceptions to this. Hunting the buffalo on horseback in the open plains, for instance, was likely to be more successful when a group of men set out than if the chase were undertaken by a single hunter. Then, too, there were organized hunting expeditions into the Dark and Bloody Ground. But to stalk both one's food and one's enemy was an individual achievement and the one thing every Indian had to do in order to live.

Next to hunting, which was a necessity, the most important occupation of the Indian was war. Here his whole object was to cover himself with glory. His standing in the tribe depended on the number of scalps he had taken and the number of prisoners he had captured. He even could exult in victory when his white enemies considered that they had won the battle. To the Indian winning a battle did not necessarily mean gaining a piece of ground, nor even holding it. Before the white man came, there was plenty of ground and plenty of elbow-room for all. Winning a battle meant getting your enemy's scalp, without being captured or wounded yourself. If the numbers against you were too great, there was no dishonor in

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slipping off into the forest and running away in order to live to fight a winning fight some other day. And this made good sense to the red man. As a dead Indian he was of no value to any one except the brave whose cabin was proudly decorated with his scalp. But do not infer from this that the Indian was afraid to die. He scorned death; only he did not court it in battle. There are many instances where an Indian has presented himself before the white man and begged for death that he might be relieved from the troubles that the white man had brought upon him and his people. One such pathetic incident occurred at the end of the Creek War when Chief Weatherford voluntarily presented himself before General Andrew Jackson. Weatherford had commanded the Indians at the battle of Fort Mims, where nearly five hundred men, women, and children had been massacred. In his defense it should be said that he had tried to protect the women and children, but his Indian warriors could not be held in check. He presented himself at Jackson's headquarters and made the following speech:

'I am Weatherford, the chief who commanded at Fort Mims. I desire peace for my people and have come to ask for it.'

General Jackson asked him how he dared to come to him after the massacre. Weatherford replied:

'General Jackson, I am not afraid of you. I fear no man, for I am a Creek warrior. I have nothing to ask in behalf of myself. You can kill me if you desire. But I come to beg you to send for the women and children of the war party, who are now starving in the woods. I exerted myself in vain to prevent the massacre of the women and children at Fort Mims. I am now done fighting. The Red Sticks are nearly all killed. If I could fight you any longer,

I would most heartily do so. Send for the women and children. They never did you any harm; but kill me if the white people want it done.'

This very incident of the massacre at Fort Mims is another illustration of the Indian's individualism. Each man consulted only his own feelings as to what was right, and followed that counsel in spite of orders from his chief that the women and children should be spared. The gathering of scalps was an individual achievement and an individual responsibility. There were many times when a fort or pioneer's cabin surrendered to the Indians on the promise of the leader of the war party that no atrocities would be committed. Before he knew it the braves would be completely out of hand and the terrified settlers would be put to death and scalped. The chief's word had been given in good faith, but probably without the agreement of all his warriors. Some truculent brave, seeing his opportunity, would crash in the skull of one of the defenseless prisoners, whereupon those who had held back could not resist the temptation to add scalps to their own belts.

There is little wonder that the frontiersmen, with knowledge of such incidents, should have concluded that the Indian was a deceitful liar, whose word was never to be trusted. The frontiersman knew the facts and had suffered from them. To him the fact that the Indian was an individualist and did right according to his own Indian code was no justification. But to those of us born many generations after the passing of the Redskin as a factor in American life it explains much.

Many treaties that were made with the Indians were short-lived because young warriors who had not won distinction and honor in battle refused to recognize that their right to take scalps could be taken away from them by a

ceremonious agreement between the white men and the old men of the tribe. This is a point of view that very few of the frontiersmen ever understood. And no wonder! But there is something decidedly human about it.

I do not believe that this selfish, individualistic trait can be too strongly emphasized as being the essential thing that made it impossible for the red man and the white man to live at peace with each other. And because the white man understood coöperation, he was finally able to drive the Indian from his lands, despite the fact that the Indians far outnumbered the whites.

And then there was a weakness of the Indian that worked surely for his downfall: his love of whiskey. Before the white man came the Indian had never tasted anything that robbed him so completely of his senses, that sent him into such mad, delirious ecstasies. The taste and the exhilarating after effect of it developed a craving in him that he would do anything to satisfy. The white man had whiskey and used it freely, but not often to excess. He knew how to use it. And, as the pioneer was no angel, he soon found out that it was often easier and cheaper to conclude a bargain with a drunken Indian than with a sober one.

The Indians themselves knew that they were wholly irresponsible when the liquor jug was flowing, and on occasions of great ceremony, when serious business was being transacted, it was carefully put out of the way. Many chiefs who saw the ruin that it was bringing on their people went to the white man and begged him not to let the Indians have it. But too often it was to the white man's advantage to satisfy this craving of the savage.

When the Indian was drunk, he was a raving madman capable of committing any violence. Frequently his most

atrocious acts were directly the result of finding a well-filled whiskey keg. Many a fort that surrendered to the joint attack of Indians led by white men was demolished and the occupants massacred because the Indians discovered the supply of liquor, and after one taste it was impossible for their white comrades to restrain them. See how bitterly logical were the consequences of the red man's love of firewater. He would have it at any sacrifice. And then when drunk he became a vicious and unreasonable, and often an uncontrollable maniac. Hence little by little the white man ruthlessly exterminated him. So to this extent the Indian contributed to his own undoing and gave the pioneer an excuse for many of his attacks that would otherwise have been utterly unjustifiable, even though many of the unscrupulous frontiersmen were responsible for selling him the liquor that turned him from a rather friendly savage into a serious menace.

The story of the Indian, therefore, is like almost every story in which there is a dispute between two or more individuals or groups of individuals. There are right and reason and justification on each side, just as there are evil and lying and intolerance on each side. One of the greatest things in the world is *understanding*. Understanding the other fellow's point of view does not necessarily mean that you will agree with it, but at least it gives you a common basis on which to work. And the man with the greatest understanding, if he has courage and determination, is likely to be the most successful. George Rogers Clark understood the Indian, his mind, his motives, and his life, and therefore was able to deal with him more successfully than most other men of his period. We shall see later how, outnumbered a thousand to one, he was able to make his most hostile Indian enemies submissive.

Before we consider the qualities of fineness in the Indian's character, and he had many, we must not overlook the fact that in addition to his cruelty he had an immense capacity for hate and revenge. He would brood over a wrong done him, either real or imagined, until he was overwhelmed with a desire for revenge. If an opportunity to square his account with his enemy presented itself shortly, well and good; but if such an opportunity did not come for years, he never forgot and time merely nursed his passion. Think back to some incident a year or so ago when some one took a mean advantage of you and for one reason or another you couldn't punch his nose as you'd have liked to do. For the first few weeks afterward, every time you thought about it, you grew hot all over, and you tentatively clenched your fist and in your mind you could see just what you would do if you ever had the chance. After six months, when you thought about it, you snorted and let it go at that. And now, if you think of it at all, you just shrug your shoulders and decide that maybe you had better 'phone him, for as likely as not he's your best pal. But with the Indian it was just the reverse. As time went on the more furious he became, the more determined he was on revenge, and in the end he was not satisfied until he had destroyed his enemy.

I mentioned above that the wrong done him might be real or imagined. And this brings out another trait. The Indian was very proud and very touchy. He was like some spoiled child. He was also very formal and observed many niceties of Indian etiquette that the white man frequently did not know or, if he knew, considered silly. When the white man overlooked these observances, the Indian far too often thought that he had been insulted, and to satisfy that peculiar pride he bided his time until he could take revenge.

This spirit of vengeance often made him treacherous and deceitful in his dealings with men he considered his enemies, and his reputation suffered in consequence. He was suspicious of every one and, for that matter, everything. This trait was natural with him, for it was protective. He knew that every other Indian with whom he came in contact was a potential enemy and the same was true of every white man; so he had to tread warily lest he be taken by surprise. Furthermore, his religion taught him that every stone and tree, every mountain and river, the wind, the rain, the lightning and thunder, each had a spirit, a little god, living in it. Some of these gods were friendly to him, but there were others that worked all manner of evil on him if he insulted them or failed to propitiate them. So he was suspicious of the things of the forest, of the sky, and of the waters.

Now let us have a look at the other side of his character. Above all things he was courageous. He had physical courage which he showed on the warpath and in the hunt. He had the courage to undertake trials of endurance involving great exertion, hardship, and hunger, with the ever-present possibility of starvation. He could travel incredible distances undergoing the severest privations without a single complaint. He had abundant moral courage: the type of courage that would make him deliberately sacrifice his life for another. There is a story of a chief who returned one day to his home and learned that his fifteen-year-old son had been taken prisoner by an enemy and carried off. The old chief set off, unarmed, for the enemy camp. He followed the trail as rapidly as he could, and when he reached the camp he found the boy tied to the torture stake and the Indians preparing to work their cruelty on him. With great dignity the old chief walked up

to the warriors and announced who he was. He explained very simply that he was an old man and in his day had taken many scalps from them, his enemies; that his son had never yet been on the warpath, because he was too young. Therefore, he had come to take his son's place; he whom they had never been able to capture. The son was set free and the old chief died in his stead.

Then there are many stories of an Indian risking his life to carry news to a friendly white man of a proposed attack on his clearing and cabin. These incidents not only show courage, but they show affection and friendship.

When not on the warpath or the hunt, the Indian was a jolly, good-natured fellow, deeply fond of his children and family. He exacted obedience from them, but he rarely had to resort to punishment. He formed lasting friendships with other members of his tribe and occasionally he would make a friend of a white man. When he gave his hand in friendship, it was with the most solemn sincerity. He considered it more deeply and took it more seriously than was usual with the white man. It was no mere gesture. Too often the Indian was disappointed in the white man when he realized how lightly his friendship was considered. One chief, when a prisoner of the white man, expressed the whole Indian point of view when he said:

'I was once a boy. I hunted in these woods. I saw the white man, and was told he was my enemy. I could not shoot him as I would a wolf or bear, yet like these he came upon me. Horses, cattle, and fields he took from me. He said he was my friend; he abused our women and children, and told us to go from the land; still he gave his hand in friendship. We took it; while taking it he had a snake in the other, his tongue was forked, he lied and stung us. I

asked for a small piece of these lands, a spot where I could place the ashes of my kindred, a spot only sufficient upon which I could lay my wife and child. This was not granted me. I was put in prison; I escaped. I have been taken again; I feel the irons in my heart. I have listened to your good talk. You and your officers have taken us by the hand in friendship. The heart of the poor Indian thanks you. We know but little, we have no books which tell us all things, but we have the Great Spirit, moon and stars. These told me last night that you would be our friend....'

One of the most important points of honor with the Indian was faithfulness to his word. When he gave his word, he contracted a sacred obligation, and neither the threat of death nor torture could shake him. He was much less likely to forget to live up to his standards of honor than was the white man.

Hospitality and generosity were outstanding characteristics. He would not share his last crust with a guest; he would give him the whole of it. Whatever food there was to be had, the guest was offered the best. If the man was scantily dressed and it was winter, he was given clothing before he departed. He was welcome to stay with the Indian as long as he desired. Even prisoners of war were, in a way, considered guests. Many white men who were being taken as prisoners to the Indians' camps have told how food, even though there might be a mere scrap or two, was equally divided among the whole party, prisoners included.

The Indian also was possessed of an endless patience. His self-control, except when under the influence of drink, was as much a part of his nature as his individualism. These factors all gave him keen, sound judgment and logical reasoning abilities. He was something of a philoso-

pher, just as so many men are who spend their lives close to nature.

As we look back across the years, the most of us feel pangs of sympathy and pity for the red man. He was misunderstood by the white man, because his life was wholly at variance with the principles on which the white man's civilization was founded. The two could not survive together, and he being the weaker had to go.

The white man's history in his dealings with the Indian does him no credit. When the first European explorers touched the coast of America, they were welcomed by the Indians as gods. The red men fell on their knees before them and made them presents. The white gods were supposed to be good gods who, according to very ancient legends, would some day come out of the great sea from the east. But what did these white gods do? At the first opportunity they kidnaped a few of the Indians and carried them back to Europe, where they were sold into slavery. If the Indians possessed gold or other things that were of value to the explorers, they were robbed; if they resisted, they were killed. And yet, when the white man extended his hand in friendship, the Indian usually trusted him and kept the friendship until it was violated.

The conqueror follows in the footsteps of the explorer, and he soon appeared on the shores of America. What he wanted was land and the things it would produce. He would take the land by force if it could not be acquired by treaty. At first the Indians were willing to sell land to the newcomers for a few glass beads or knives or fish-hooks, and the limits of the ceded territory were carefully marked out. Although the white man refused to allow the Indian to come onto his new property to hunt, he did not hesitate to penetrate deep into the country of the Indian. And if he

found a particularly favorable spot for settling or farming, he told the Indians to move on and to keep clear of his fields and his farms. Had the white man lived as the Indian, by hunting and fishing, there would have been less trouble between them, for they could have used the same land. But the white man wanted to plant fields where no one should trespass, and he wanted to use the Indians' hunting ground as well.

For the most part, the first settlers in America were a pretty rough, bigoted, and intolerant lot, in spite of the fact that time and legend have lent them a respectability that makes sentimental societies raise monuments to their *sainted* memory. Such an eminent man as Cotton Mather wrote 'that probably the devil decoyed these miserable savages hither, in hopes that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ would never come here to destroy or disturb his absolute empire over them.' And another divine urged that the Indians be hunted down with dogs, like bears or wolves, for they were no better than savage animals.

The most formidable enemies of the early Massachusetts settlers were the Pequots. At first, these Indians had been willing to make peace with the white man. But when they saw through the process of robbing them of their land, they quite naturally decided to protect themselves by making war. This meant, of course, murder and massacre. Finally Captain John Mason led an expedition against them. After a hard march he attacked their encampment just at dawn while the Indians were yet asleep. The Pequot Indian fort covered about twenty acres on top of a hill and was surrounded by a high palisade. The wigwams were crowded closely together and were covered with heavy thatch. Inside them were between five and six hundred men, women, and children. From the start the

battle was all in favor of the English, but Captain Mason was a thorough man, and he saw that to kill all these Indians with musket and sword would be a slow and laborious job, so he grabbed a brand from some smouldering fire and touched it to the inflammable wigwams. In a few minutes the whole fort was ablaze. The Indians who tried to escape from burning to death were easily shot down and every last one of them was killed.

Was Captain Mason censured for this ruthless massacre of women and children? By no means! He was made a hero, and the Puritans considered it an example of God's good will that so many of their enemies had been exterminated. So we see that the white man could make war just as cruelly as the Indian, and he did not have the Indian's excuse that he was fighting for his existence in the land that was rightly his and that had been his from the dawn of antiquity.

Years later at the conclusion of a treaty of peace one old Indian said to the white general: 'You talk to us about concessions. It appears strange that you should expect any from us, who have only been defending our just rights against your invasions. We want peace. Restore to us our country and we shall be enemies no longer.'

The treatment the Indians received at the hands of most of the early settlers was barbarous and unnecessary and is a blemish on our early history. We know it was unnecessary, for there were a few outstanding examples among the white men where the Indians were treated fairly and in turn respected the concessions they had made. William Penn was one such example, and he has left an interesting description of the red man.

'They are tall, straight, tread strong and clever, and walk with a lofty chin. Their custom of rubbing the body

with bear's fat gives them a swarthy color. They have little black eyes. Their heads and countenances have nothing of the negro type, and I have seen as comely European-like faces among them as on the other side of the sea. Their language is lofty, yet narrow; like short-hand in writing, one word serveth in the place of three, and the rest are supplied by the understanding of the hearers.... In liberality they excell; nothing is too good for their friend... [they are] light of heart, strong affections, but soon spent.'

Another thing to be kept in mind that is important in considering the Indian and his relations with the white man is that different parts of America were claimed by different European peoples. There were English, French, Dutch, Spanish, and finally the Americans of the United States. Each one of these different political groups told the Indian that he had an all-powerful Great White Father living far to the east who would protect him in time of need, and that he, in turn, must fight to protect the people and property of this nebulous king. And the white men who praised one Great Father let the Indians understand that it was all right for them to make war against white men who claimed to have another Great Father. Then the white men would go to war with each other accompanied by their Indian allies. And suddenly the fighting would stop, for no reason that the Indian could see. But they would be told that there had been a great council across the sea and their all-powerful Father had agreed to give some of the Indian land he claimed to another Great Father who, presumably, was a little more powerful than the one they had been assured was all-powerful. It is little wonder that the Indians began to doubt the goodness and all-powerfulness of their changing Great Fathers, and, as

a last extremity, took sides with those white men who gave them the most presents and made the most attractive promises.

The Indians of the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys, when George Rogers Clark went among them, had strong reasons for wondering just who their Great White Father was. He had been the King of France until the conclusion of the French and Indian War. Then suddenly he became the English King, who presented him with guns and knives and a continuous supply of powder at the settlement of Detroit. And he was given whiskey and told to go out and gather the scalps of the Big Knives and for each scalp he brought in he would be paid a bounty. He naturally resented the presence of the Big Knives in the Dark and Bloody Ground, for they were killing and driving away the game and they were clearing the land and making settlements, and already they had told him to keep out, he whose hunting ground it had always been. So the Great Father of the English seemed good. He apparently judged a man's worth by the number of scalps he could take, and he made him presents of guns and ammunition with which he could regain the land that the Big Knives were slowly taking from him. They had heard that the Big Knives had a new Great Father, one that had never cast his eye on this land before, but being new he surely could not be so powerful as the British, and, besides, the British officers told him that the Great Father of the Big Knives was a weakling and would not survive long. And then came George Rogers Clark.

CHAPTER IX

THE WHITE MAN WITH ONE TONGUE

George Rogers Clark had been successful in his campaign even beyond his own expectations. The whole of the Illinois territory was in his hands and the white inhabitants were singing his praise, with the exception of a British hunter here or there who tried, in vain, to stir up resentment against the Americans in general and the Big Knives in particular. We can imagine a look of satisfaction furtively playing across his lean, tanned face as he penned his report of the campaign to Patrick Henry, who had backed him so heartily. And how that fiery old patriot must have chuckled when he read the Colonel's letter! What audacity there was in this determined young man who could seize a country more than three times as large as the great State of Virginia without shedding a drop of blood!

But whatever satisfaction there was in a job well started, it would be short-lived if the job that loomed ahead were not dealt with speedily and effectively. And that caused the Colonel at Kaskaskia no end of anxiety.

For the moment the Indians in the neighborhood were too astounded by the sudden and silent arrival of the Big Knives to want to try them in battle. Was it some sort of black magic? And their consternation, if anything, was increased when they saw that the Big Knives did not take the trouble even to kill their enemies, but by some spell turned them into howling, fanatical supporters. At Vincennes, the mere news of the coming of the Big Knives had been enough to make the people pull down the flag of the Great British Father and in its place run up the strange new emblem with stars and bars. And, stranger still, the chief of the Big Knives acted as though he had no interest whatever in the Indians. He did not even notice them. Formerly when the white man came, the first thing he did was to call for the chiefs and hold a council and present them with gifts and ask for peace. But the Big Knife brushed them aside as he would the deer flies. What sort of man was this Big Knife with a band of warriors who spurned scalps?

This was the kind of news that, like the birds, traveled in all directions, and with the speed of the teal duck. Far to the northwest on the shores of Lake Superior it was discussed at the council fires of the Chippewas and a chief with a band of warriors was appointed to journey to the camp of the Big Knife to learn with his own ears and see with his own eyes if the astounding news were true. And if true, to treat with him for peace. So the little band set out on its journey of five hundred miles to Cahokia. And as they traveled, they fell in with bands of braves from the tribes of the Ottoways, the Pottawatomies, the Missessogies. There were fierce men from the tribes of the Sioux and crafty Puans. There were Sacs and Foxes and Sayges. And from the east came the Wabash and Maumees; there

were Mingoes and Delawares, and here and there a dreaded Shawnee sent to observe the Council of the Big Knife. Like ants converging on the carcass of a fallen animal, thin lines of red savages followed the scent of rumor that had spread to them from the camp of the Big Knife. Would he prove to be a fallen animal?

Clark soon learned of the gathering of the Indians, long before they arrived, for news travels in the wild country like a wave in a wilderness lake. And he made his plans for receiving them. It was a scheme for dealing with the Indians, of impressing and awing them, based on Clark's instinctive understanding of the temperament of the primitive people of the forest. It was a system of consummate backwoods diplomacy.

But as test by experiment is more convincing than the most perfect untried theory, Clark determined to try out his plan on Indians near at hand before he had to treat with the representatives of the tribes of the Northwest. So he sent Captain Helm on the way to Vincennes, and Helm was armed with a speech from the Big Knife to the Indians of the Wabash.

Living near Vincennes was a chief of the Piankeshaws by the picturesque name of Tobacco's Son. Whether or not Colonel Clark considered the name a good omen as suggestive of the peace pipe, we do not know, but it was to him that the speech was addressed. Furthermore, Tobacco's Son was the grand chief of the League of the Wabash. He was a sort of League of Nations in one man, and the tribes of the Wabash set out on no great undertaking without his consent and advice. He, of course, was an ally of the British and had sworn allegiance to the Great Father whose outpost was at Detroit, and he was constantly sending his braves out to bloody the land for them.

As soon as possible after his arrival at Vincennes, Captain Helm sent word to Tobacco's Son that he would like to see him. The great chief, decked with feathers and paint and accompanied by some of his warriors, presented himself with cold and formal dignity at the fort. But he was no more proud or disdainful in his bearing than the Big Knife Captain. With the fewest words of explanation he presented the letter from Colonel Clark. It was read by an interpreter.

'You Indians living on the Wabash! We are not come with design to take your land from you.... We only desire to pass through your country to Detroit, to turn out your Father who is there; for your late Father, the King of France, is come to life, and will recover the country he has lost to the English. Here are several belts for you to consider: a white one for the French, a red one for the Spanish, a blue one in the name of the Colonies, a green one offering peaceable terms from the Americans, and lastly, a bloody one offering you war, if you prefer that. We desire you to leave a very wide road for us, as we are many in number and love to have room enough for our march; for, in swinging our arms as we walk, we may chance to hurt some of your young people with our swords.'

The expression of Tobacco's Son's face did not alter in the slightest as he heard the defiant words of the Big Knife, but there was no doubt that he was impressed. In his most ceremonious manner he drew himself up and replied to Captain Helm that he was indeed glad to meet one of the Big Knives about whom all had heard so much. He admitted frankly that after their Great Father, the King of France, had left the land, he had listened to the talk of the British and had joined them in their fights, but he had 'always thought the sky looked gloomy.' Now the Big

Knives were offering him a choice of belts, for peace or war. This was a question that could not be lightly settled, for he was a warrior and spoke with but one tongue. He would call his councilors together and, as soon as possible, give an answer.

The council of the Indians convened and debated for days. Captain Helm began to fear that perhaps the tone of Clark's speech had angered them and they would choose the bloody belt and war. His position was trying. He had a regiment of militia made up of French volunteers, but not a single soldier from the American force. And though the French made a fine showing on parade, he had reasons of his own for doubting their loyalty in the face of an enemy, either Indian or British. We shall see later that he was to have some of his doubts confirmed.

Just about the time that Captain Helm thought he could wait no longer, he was invited to attend the council. In the presence of the solemn, dignified chiefs and the keen-eyed, eager young braves, Tobacco's Son made his reply to the demand of the Big Knife. He said that the war between the British and the Americans had troubled his people very much, as it had been difficult for them to learn the truth and know which side was in the right. They did not want to offend the Great Spirit by fighting for the British, whom he now believed had deceived them, if the Big Knives were fighting for justice. So he would send out word to 'all the red people on the Wabash' that they should no longer make war against the Americans and that they should not listen to the 'bad birds' that came from the British. But, the wily old savage pointed out that, if the British should be successful in the war against the Big Knives, the Indians would then serve them as they were now planning to serve the Americans.

When he came, at last, to the end of his speech, he jumped up, and, turning first to the Indians and then to Captain Helm, he struck his breast with his clenched fist and called them all to witness that he was a man and a brave warrior and that he gave his hand in friendship to the representative of the Big Knives and there should be peace between them. This was followed by the ceremony of smoking the peace pipe and brought to a most satisfactory conclusion the first of Clark's negotiations with the Indians.

Captain Helm kept the Colonel advised, by frequent dispatches, of the progress that was being made daily in winning the confidence of the Indians. The French inhabitants, the hunters, and *coureurs de bois* were infinitely more valuable in these negotiations than would have been any show of force the Big Knives could muster. Captain Helm established civil courts similar to those that were working so successfully in Cahokia under Captain Bowman, and he relieved the people of all the petty burdens that had been put upon them by their recent British Commandant. He had brought no army with him that had to be supported by levies on the people. All in all they had never before enjoyed such freedom and independence. It was most natural for the Indians to come to the campfires of the Frenchmen, whom they had always trusted, and as they sat around in friendly conversation they learned of the great benefits that had come with the Big Knives. Many of the French outspokenly urged the Indians to give up their war against the Americans. Not only were the French working in the interest of the newcomers, but the Spanish at St. Louis, just across the river from Cahokia, advised the Indians to come in and ask for peace. So whichever way they turned, they heard good

reports of the Big Knives, and no doubt they likewise heard stories of the great army that the Big Knives were mustering at the Falls of the Ohio. The result was that 'the British interest daily lost ground in this quarter.'

By the middle of August, Cahokia was becoming crowded with unexpected numbers of Indians. The streets were full of them by day and at night their camp-fires blazed in a great semicircle from the river's edge north of the town to the river's edge at the south. Many of these tribes were then actively at war with the Big Knives and some of them were at war against each other. There is little wonder that Colonel Clark wrote that he 'was under some apprehension among such a lot of devils.'

Any qualms he felt, however, he kept strictly to himself or at most confided them to Captain Bowman. He refused to take up his headquarters in the fort, as that might give the Indians the idea that he feared them and at this time he wanted to show nothing so much as indifference. He strode about the town disdainfully, ignoring the savages about him or returning their sullen glances with his cold, penetrating stare. He was the cut of a man that the Indian could not help but admire, even though it be grudgingly.

But this very indifference proved to be a dangerous game and nearly cost him his life.

Colonel Clark had been in Cahokia only a couple of days and had spent his time conferring with those Indians of whom he had had a favorable report. His spies among them, and the French as well, kept him informed as to the sincerity of the various tribes and chiefs that approached him. Those he doubted he disregarded and refused to talk to, giving them to understand that he was not seeking favors from them any more than he was making them

presents. He merely wanted an understanding so that all might know whether there was to be war or peace between them.

Among the Indians he had refused to treat with were a group of Puans. These were big, surly fellows who hung around the fort trying to make trouble whenever possible. And worse still, they had pitched their wigwams about a hundred yards from Colonel Clark's headquarters on the bank of the little Cahokia River, which at that time of year was a muddy creek, scarcely knee deep. They were a noisy, bragging lot, and from the first seemed to have some design that, for the moment, could not be discovered. The Frenchmen came to Clark and warned him that the Puans were up to some mischief and begged him to move into the fort for greater protection. But he thanked them and replied that the Big Knife could probably take care of himself.

That evening, a little after midnight, the camp-fires were only a smouldering glow. In the stillness of the summer's night sounded the occasional bark of a coyote or the chuckle of an owl from the high branches of an oak. A dark figure slinking, and a Puan spy crept in to his own camp and announced that the house of the Big Knife chief had long been dark and the sentinel who marched before his door had one eye closed with sleep. This was the moment the Puans had waited for. Six or eight of the young braves picked up their rifles and quietly slipped down to the creek. With never the sound of a splash they waded across to the opposite bank and there lay concealed in the bushes waiting for a signal from their companions. With ordered stealth the remaining warriors fixed their tomahawks and scalping-knives in their belts. They then crept out of their wigwams and the signal was given to the wait-

ing braves across the river. These savages now jumped up from their hiding-places and discharged their rifles in the air shouting the battle-cry of one of their enemies. Immediately the Puans in their camp set up a feigned cry of alarm and ran, as though seeking safety, toward the house in which the chief of the Big Knives lay sleeping. But the cry of alarm turned to a savage shout of attack and as quickly dropped to a murmur of consternation, for there where there had been only one sentinel were an undetermined number of guards lurking in the shadows, rifles ready for instant use. As quickly as they had come, they melted into the darkness and sneaked back to their camp, but not before they had been recognized by the guard.

The shots and shouts started an uproar in the town, and in a few minutes lanterns were swinging along the streets, and men, hastily clad, were gathering at the fort, rifle in hand, to stand with the Big Knives against the Indians. Lights sprang up in the Indian encampment beyond the town and scouts warily approached the fort to see what devilment the palefaces might be planning. The moment was tense, and one shot accidentally fired by a nervous hand would have started a battle that could only have ended in disaster for the Big Knives.

The night was light, and very soon George Rogers Clark was seen mingling with the soldiers, calming the excited Frenchmen and urging them to withhold their fire until the cause of the disturbance had been determined.

The sentry who had been on guard at headquarters insisted that he had recognized the Indians as members of the Puan contingent. This was corroborated by other members of the guard. Thereupon some of the leading Frenchmen went to the Puan camp and ordered them,

chiefs and braves, to come to the fort. They readily admitted that it had been they who had rushed to Colonel Clark's house. But they explained that they had been fired upon from across the river by some of their enemies and that they had been seeking the protection of the Big Knife. And when they had come for help, the guard had threatened them so that they preferred to return to their own camp and protect themselves as best they could.

Their assumed and injured innocence seemed so real that Colonel Clark almost believed them and felt, since they had turned to him so readily when they were hard-pressed, that possibly he had misjudged them. But the Frenchmen were not so easily beguiled, having had a previous opportunity of forming an opinion of the Puans; and their opinion did the Puans no credit.

One particularly suspicious *coureur de bois* with the Indians thought he noticed that the leggings and moccasins of some of them were wet and like any good woodsman he sought to find the explanation. He called for a light and all the Indians were carefully inspected. Some of them, as we know, were dripping wet up to the knees, and there was river mud on their moccasins and ankles. When they were asked to explain, some of them said that they had been near the river when their enemies had fired on them and having some thought of fighting back they had run into the river; others said that after they had retreated from the guard they had gone down to the river to see if their enemies were yet there. But all of their explanations were equally improbable and their confusion and hesitation made their guilt obvious.

George Rogers Clark plainly showed his contempt of them, and announced that since it was the townspeople that they had disturbed, the Big Knives always being on

the alert, he would leave it to the Frenchmen to do with them whatever they wanted. And he turned on his heel and strode back into his house. However, he whispered to some of the Frenchmen that he would like to have all the chiefs of the tribe seized and put in irons and locked up in the guard-house. This was done, to the great consternation of the Indians, and the town went back to a restless sleep.

It was obvious the next morning that the news of the attempted attack and its outcome had spread throughout the whole Indian encampment and they resented such high-handed treatment of some of the greatest chiefs among them. Though the Puans may not have had a very high standing among the white men, they were warriors of importance among the Indians. It made the chiefs of the other tribes wonder what sort of treatment might be in store for them at the hands of the Big Knives. Colonel Clark sensed the ugly mood instantly and doubled his guards and patrols about the town, though he himself refused to move into the fort.

The disgruntled Puan chiefs sent word from their cell in the guard-house that they wanted an interview with the Colonel. He refused them, saying he was no longer interested in them, as he had more important business to attend to. The Puan braves, seeing their chiefs in prison, were truly alarmed, nor could their entreaties gain them anything with the Big Knife chief, who would not allow them to approach him. In their extremity they went to the other tribes and pleaded with them to go before the Colonel in their behalf.

When a dignified group of chiefs from several of the tribes presented themselves at headquarters, they were received with equal dignity, but when they announced the

purpose of their errand, Colonel Clark cut them short, telling them that he was convinced that the Puans 'were a set of villains' and were not worthy of consideration by him or the other Indians. He told them he knew that the Puans were in the pay of the British, and that they were welcome to believe the 'bad birds' and to talk with a double tongue if it pleased them. As for himself, he was a warrior and a man, and he didn't care who were his friends and who were his enemies. With that he intimated that the interview was over and dismissed the astonished chiefs.

This was the most disturbing thing that the Big Knife had yet done. Some of the tribes were truly alarmed; others urged that the Indians unite and fall upon the town in a body and once and for all do away with this Big Knife who came among them offering them war as readily as peace. But there were few supporters of this plan; the Big Knife, they feared, had powers they knew nothing of. If not, he would never be so careless and so indifferent. The Frenchmen, too, were anxious and on the alert. They stayed near their own doors, their long rifles leaning against their shoulders; their eyes and ears strained to catch the first warning of trouble. The guards that moved about the town with a cautious, silent step seemed only to increase the general atmosphere of uneasiness.

While every one was waiting tense and expectant, George Rogers Clark was trying to think of something he might do, something bold and dramatic that would convince the sullen savages of his complete indifference. So it was with utter amazement that the white men and Indians alike heard the news that the Colonel was making preparations at his house to give a party that evening for 'a number of gentlemen and ladies'! When the guests arrived, they found everything in readiness for a dance.

The largest room in the house had been cleared of its rough furnishings except for some benches and stools that were ranged along the wall; candles leaned from buck-horn sconces on the wall, shedding a glowing brilliance in contrast to the dimly lighted neighboring cabins. At one end of the room sat the orchestra. It consisted of three men, two creoles and an American soldier. One of the Frenchmen, a grizzled old fellow, tentatively fingered the strings of his violin, while his younger countryman, scarcely audibly, piped a merry little tune as old as the troubadours. The soldier's instrument was a standard household article, a big earthenware whiskey jug; but as a source of music it was a novelty in the town of Cahokia. As a boy he had learned how to play it from the negroes far to the south in the Holston settlements. It was not difficult, when you knew how to pucker your lips and blow across the mouth of the jug, making it deliver up a varied assortment of explosive booms and buzzes as a rich bass accompaniment to the fiddle and the flute.

Colonel Clark greeted his guests with genial and unperturbed hospitality, and with all the courtly manner of a gay young Virginian he took the belle of Cahokia as his partner and led a grand march. The sound of music and laughter attracted many spectators from among the Indians, who looked from a distance through the open windows with mingled admiration and suspicion at the revels of the Big Knife. They could not understand such bravado, such indifference to the danger they well knew surrounded him. In Clark's own words they 'danced nearly the whole night.'

From information brought to him in the morning by his spies, Colonel Clark was convinced that his methods had been successful and that the Indians were in the frame of

mind he had hoped to bring them to. So he sent a messenger to the chief of each tribe summoning them all to a grand council, telling them that he was ready to listen to any proposals they might wish to make. And among those 'invited' were the sorry-looking Puan chiefs, still in their shackles, for they must hear and see what went on between the Big Knife and the members of the other tribes.

When the chiefs and their braves gathered at the council place, they formed themselves in a great semicircle facing the table at which sat the chief of the Big Knives, a few of his soldiers standing with easy assurance behind him. A new council fire was kindled and the Great Spirit was called upon to witness that they spoke with but one tongue as befitted men and warriors. Their spokesman advanced from the group of grim, motionless warriors and with measured oratory admitted that they had been guilty of taking up the bloody hatchet against the Big Knives, but laid the whole blame on the 'bad birds' the British had sent among them. Now that the Big Knife had come to them and had given them the opportunity of choosing peace or war, and as the Great Spirit was guiding them all in making their choice, they hoped that they might become friends and that wars between them would become a thing of the past. In conclusion the chief threw the belt of red wampum he had received from the British to the ground and stamped on it, to prove that they would never again listen to the blandishments of the enemies of the Big Knives.

Colonel Clark then rose and said he was glad to hear the sentiments they had expressed, but these were weighty considerations that could not be given a hasty answer. He would be ready to meet them next day, when he hoped 'that the hearts and ears of all people would be open to re-

ceive the truth, which should be pure, without deception.' He urged them to be prepared for the outcome of the meeting on the morrow, for perhaps their very existence as nations depended upon it. He saw that his remarks had given the Indians satisfaction, but he forbade any shaking of hands, for peace was not yet concluded, and there would be 'time enough to give the hand when the heart could be given also.'

This, too, pleased the savages greatly, and not to be outdone by the Big Knife they replied 'that such sentiments were like those of men who had one heart and did not speak with a double tongue.'

This brought the council to a conclusion for that day, and while the Indians stalked back to their camp to discuss the rather unexpected outcome of the meeting, George Rogers Clark returned to his headquarters to prepare the speech he would make to them when they next met. And the Puan chiefs, disregarded by all but their own followers, were led back to the guard-house.

Clark's belief that the British and Colonial policy of dealing with the Indians had been wrong and that his policy of indifference was right, had so far been justified by events. Now he was to put his theories to an even greater test. The speech he made to the assembled tribes on the following day not only shows the spirit of his plan, but also is a document in the history of the white man's dealings with the Indians that should have been taken as a model by the men who came after him. Had they done so, they would have saved bloodshed and bitterness, and the history of Western settlement, so far as the Indian was concerned, would have done us more credit.

The council was opened with the usual lengthy ceremony. The chief of the Big Knives rose and spoke.

'Men and warriors! Pay attention! You informed me yesterday that the Great Spirit brought us together, which you hoped was good, as He is good. I also have the same hope, and whatever may be agreed to by us at the present time, I expect each party will strictly adhere to, whether for peace or war, and henceforward prove ourselves worthy of the attention of the Great Spirit. I am a man and a warrior, and not a councilor. In my right hand I carry war, and in my left hand peace.

'I was sent by the great Council Fire of the Big Knives and their friends to take possession of all the towns the English possess in this country and to remain here watching the motions of the red people; to bloody the paths of those who continue to try to stop the course of the river, and to clear the roads that lead from us to those who wish to be in friendship with us, that the women and children may walk without anything being in the way for them to strike their feet against; and to continue to call on the Great Fire for a sufficient number of warriors to darken the land of the enemy, so that the inhabitants should hear no sound but that of birds that live on blood.

'I know that a mist is yet before your eyes. I will dispel the clouds that you may clearly see the cause of the war between the Big Knives and the English, that you may judge yourselves which is in the right; and then, if you are men and warriors, which you profess yourselves to be, prove it by strictly adhering to what you may now declare, without deceiving either party and proving yourselves to be only old women!

'The Big Knives are very much like the red people; they don't know well how to make blankets, powder, and cloth. They buy from the English, from whom they formerly descended, and they live chiefly by raising corn, hunt-

ing, and trade, as you and the French, your neighbors, do. But the Big Knives are daily becoming more numerous, like the trees in the woods, so that the land becomes poor and the hunting scarce. Having but little to trade with, the women began to cry to see their children naked, and tried to learn to make clothes for themselves, and soon gave their husbands blankets of their own making. The men learned to make guns and powder, so that they did not have to buy so much from the English. Then the English got mad and put a strong garrison through all the country (as you see they have done among you, on the lakes, and among the French), and would not let our women spin, nor the men make powder, nor let us trade with anybody else, but said that we should buy everything from them. And, since we have got saucy, they would make us give two bucks for a blanket that we used to get for one; and that we should do as they please, and they killed some of us to make the rest fear.

'This is the truth and the cause of the war between us, which did not take place for some time after they had served us in this manner. The women and children were cold and hungry and continued to cry. The young men were lost and had no councillor to put them on the right path. The whole land was dark, and the old men hung their heads for shame, as they could not see the sun; and thus there was mourning for many years.

'At last the Great Spirit took pity on us and kindled a great council fire that never gave out, at a place called Philadelphia. He stuck down a post, and left a tomahawk by it, and went away. At once the sun came out and the sky was blue. The old men held up their heads and assembled at the fire. They took up the hatchet and sharpened it, and they put it into the hands of the young men,

and told them to strike the English as long as they could find one on this side of the Great Water. The young men immediately struck the war-post and blood issued. Thus the war began. The English were driven from one place to another until they got weak and hired you red people to fight for them and help them. The Great Spirit, getting angry at this, caused your old Father the French King and other nations to join the Big Knives and fight with them against all their enemies, so that the English has become like a deer in the woods.

'From this you may see that it is the Great Spirit that caused your waters to be troubled, because you fought for the people he was mad with. And if your women and children should cry, you must blame yourselves for it and not the Big Knives.

'You can now judge who is in the right!

'I have already told you who I am. Here is a bloody belt and a white one. Take whichever you please. Behave like men and don't let your present situation, being surrounded by Big Knives, cause you to take up the one belt with your hands, when your hearts drink up the other. If you take the bloody path, you shall go from this town in safety and join your friends the English; and we will try like warriors to see who can put the most stumbling blocks in the roads and keep our clothes the longest perfumed with blood.

'If you should take the path of peace, and now be received as brothers to the Big Knives and the French, and should hereafter listen to the bad birds that will be flying through your land, you will then be counted, not as men, but creatures having two tongues who ought to be destroyed without listening to what you say, as nobody could understand you.

'Since I am convinced you have never before heard the truth, I would not wish you to give me an answer before you have time to counsel, if you wish it. We will part this evening, and when you are ready, if the Great Spirit will bring us together again, let us prove ourselves worthy by speaking and thinking with but one heart and one tongue.'

The Indians were deeply impressed, and as they moved away from the council fire they clearly showed their satisfaction, and Clark, too, was satisfied that he was accomplishing his purpose.

Treaty-making was by no means a hasty affair. There were meetings and deliberations and more meetings and more deliberations. It is easy to imagine how trying all this must have been to a man of George Rogers Clark's temperament, who was accustomed to making decisions without hesitation. At length the last day of the great council arrived, and even Clark has made a note that on this 'day business commenced with more than usual ceremony.'

All the people of the town, both white and red, were invited to attend. Before this solemn gathering a new fire was kindled. From the gathering of warriors the chief who was to act as spokesman advanced to the table where the Big Knife sat. Close behind him was a chief carrying the sacred pipe and another with an ember from the newly kindled fire. The savage held the glowing coal toward the sun, the father of all fire, and invoked a blessing. It was then presented to the earth and to the four points of the compass. With it the pipe was lighted and the Great Spirit was called upon to witness. Colonel Clark first drew a breath of smoke through the long stem, after which it was presented to the other participants in the ceremony. Then the chief with the white belt of peace in his hand began to

CLARK MAKING A TREATY WITH THE INDIANS

speak. He said that they could see clearly now that the sky had been opened and they knew that what the Big Knife had said had been put into his heart by the Great Spirit, for the Big Knife did not speak like any other man they had ever heard. Too long had the British lied to them and deceived them, and no longer would they allow the bad birds from the north to pass through their land disturbing the country and putting fear into the hearts of the women and children. They chose the belt of peace with a sincere heart, and would cast the bloody tomahawk deep into the river where it could never be found again. Their warriors would be called in from the warpath and they would smooth the roads for their brothers the Big Knives, whenever they came to see them. And they would send messengers to the Indians who lived far beyond their own tribes telling them the great story of the Big Knives' council fire at Cahokia.

At this point the chief held out the belt toward Colonel Clark, who rose and accepted it, after which they shook hands. This was the signal for the other braves to advance and, though ceremony was still strictly observed, there was a general feeling of harmony as the Indians and white men took each other by the hands.

However, there was still one note of discord present, the Puan chiefs, in irons and under guard. The treaty that had just been made did not include them, and they had every reason to expect that the Big Knife would set out immediately for the villages of their tribe and destroy them. No longer could they call on their neighboring tribes for help, for they had concluded a solemn peace with the Big Knife.

Before the council dispersed, Colonel Clark ordered the Puans to be brought before him and had their irons re-

moved. Very disdainfully and with many sneers he told these much-cowed savages that their plan to take him had been obvious, for a bird from their own country had whispered in his ear that they were not to be trusted. With a sweeping gesture he said that every one agreed with him that they ought all to be put to death. But as he had thought about it, he had decided that they were too mean and cowardly to be killed by a Big Knife. When the Big Knives came across such people in the woods, they commonly shot them down as they did wolves, to prevent their eating the deer, but never talked about it. However, as they were nothing but old women, they should be treated like old women, and he would take their breech clouts from them and see that they were well supplied with provisions for their journey home, for old women couldn't be expected to hunt, and he wouldn't have it on his conscience that they had perished from starvation. With that he turned on his heel and began to talk to some of the other Indians about an entirely different subject.

What little pride was left to the Puans now vanished completely. Never had an Indian tribe been so publicly degraded. They felt they must have peace at any cost. They humbly advanced to the Big Knife's table and laid on it a pipe of peace with a belt, and one of them started to make a speech. Seeing this, Clark drew his sword and cut the pipe and the belt in two and told them that the Big Knife never negotiated with women. They should go back and sit down and enjoy themselves as other women did.

Rebuffed, insulted, scorned, the Puans were at their last extremity. Two of the young bucks came forward and, sitting down on the ground, drew their blankets over their heads. An old chief stood on either side of them and again

implored the great Big Knife to listen to them. They admitted that they had been bad Indians and deserved punishment, and they now hoped that the great Big Knife would take these two warriors as atonement for their sins, dashing out their brains if he saw fit or keeping them as slaves.

The spectators were suddenly silent, and the moment was tense while the Big Knife deliberated. The Indians stood and stared impassively, their black, beady eyes fixed on the face of the Colonel. The emotional Frenchmen wore an expression of mixed horror and wonder, while the American soldiers leaned on their arms showing complete approval of whatever their chief might do. This turn of events was unexpected, but no more so than what followed.

George Rogers Clark rose and looked at the men around him. Then he said he was glad to see that there were men in every nation, and it was obvious that there were at least two among the Puans. It was these men who ought to be chiefs. With such men he was willing to treat, and through them he would grant peace to their people. Never were there two more surprised young men than these, waiting momentarily for their violent transfer to the happy hunting ground. Instead they were taken to the arms of the awesome Big Knife and greeted by him as chiefs. Clark was loud in their praise, and he presented them to the white men and then the Indians as brave and worthy warriors, and every man saluted them. This was the dramatic climax, miraculously turned to the Big Knife's advantage, of an attempt on his life that might have been his undoing. Instead, it became legend that swelled his reputation and authority even to the far tribes that never knew his name was George Rogers Clark.

Colonel Clark stayed at Cahokia some weeks longer carrying on his parleys with new arrivals, tribes that had not been able to arrive in time for the great council fire or tribes that, having heard of the doings of the Big Knife, could no longer restrain their curiosity to come and see for themselves. His treatment of each of the chiefs was a personal one, always suited to the temperament of the individual and always successful. Chief Blackbird, who had learned the ways of the European diplomatist from the English at Detroit, refused to see the Big Knife until he had received a proper invitation; though he let it be known that this was all that was holding him back. And when he arrived, he had a Frenchman with him so that he might be formally introduced. Then there was Chief Big Gate, who strode into the peace councils wearing the bloody belt given him by the English, parading it for all to see, and indicating with every gesture that the blandishments of the Big Knife afforded him great amusement. But the Big Knife took no notice of him for several days, and when he finally did he greeted him as a great chief and in the same breath rebuked him for his boorish, swaggering conduct, which was not befitting a man of his standing and caliber, and by gentle insinuation so upset the Indian's dignity that he then and there renounced his British allies, tore the clothes from his body, and as a naked savage, a brave who had thrived on war from boyhood, begged the Big Knife to consider him his staunchest friend and supporter. In fact, Big Gate immediately conceived a plan to lead a party of his warriors against Detroit to gather British scalps and prisoners as a test and proof of his new loyalty. But Colonel Clark would not approve.

And so his affairs progressed and new stories of his suc-

cesses daily came to the ears of Colonel Hamilton, the British Governor at Detroit. Hamilton, seeing his Indian allies deserting him on every side for the Big Knives, determined on a campaign that would strike terror into the hearts of the fickle red men. At the same time he intended giving these upstart Americans such a drubbing that they would realize the Illinois territory still belonged to the British.

CHAPTER X

HAMILTON, THE HAIR-BUYER

Not all of Clark's time, however, was taken up in dealings with the Indians. There were other problems of deep concern and a few pleasant diversions.

One of the most serious difficulties of his position, as we have already seen, was his great distance from his political base in Virginia. Although his supporters in the East were enthusiastic over the results of his campaign and his negotiations with the Indians, the war had been brought to their own coast and they needed all their resources of men and money for their own defense. Furthermore, Congress was planning a campaign against Detroit to start from Pittsburgh, and called upon Governor Henry to supply twenty-five hundred men from Virginia, who with five hundred regulars were considered an adequate force. The cost of this expedition was estimated at one hundred and eighty-two thousand pounds. This was a sum more than one hundred and fifty times as great as that given to Clark for his expedition which, according to the plans he had worked out with Patrick Henry, was not only to capture the whole of the Northwest Territory, but Detroit as well. The great expense of the undertaking did, however, make Congress decide 'that the expedition

against the fortress of Detroit be for the present deferred.' It is a story of bitter neglect that a small part of this money and a few of the men were not sent to the aid of George Rogers Clark.

Even the small force that remained with Clark in Illinois had to be fed and clothed and supplied with powder and shot. As the policy he had determined on was to make friends of the French inhabitants, he could not resort to force for his supplies; moreover, his strength was not sufficient to cope with the inhabitants if they were not friendly to his interests.

In New Orleans was a man, a great patriot and a great American. His name was Oliver Pollock. At this time he was the financial agent for both Virginia and Congress. He followed the news of Clark's campaign with understanding and interest and saw the results in their true proportions. It was to him that Clark turned for funds necessary to maintain his position in the Illinois country. Clark's procedure was to draw bills on the State of Virginia and send them to Pollock in New Orleans for acceptance. Because of the implied authority and because of the faith he had in the work that was being done, which could not be done without these funds, Pollock paid the bills from his personal fortune and hoped for justice at the hands of the Virginia Assembly. Clark realized the position in which he was putting his friend, but necessity forced him to do it. Finally Pollock wrote him: 'You draw on me sundry bills for the account of Virginia which, with those already come to hand, amount to $8,550.4. I am in great distress with respect to the payment of those bills. Notwithstanding this, I have accepted all your Bills in full expectation of the states supplying me with funds by the latter end of the year, a disappointment in which will effectually ruin me.'

But the States did not supply him with funds and Clark's bills were protested and discounted, many of them being bought up for practically nothing by men who were willing to gamble on collecting their face value at the end of the war. Pollock was ruined because of his generous patriotism. And it was not until years after the war, after suffering the humiliation and hardships of the debtor's prison, that he was paid a very small proportion of his expenditures by Congress and some negligible amount by Virginia.

All this is most important to our story, for it was the bills and receipts that George Rogers Clark was issuing at this time, issued with scrupulous care and for the bare necessities of his men, that were later to descend upon him and make the latter half of his life an almost unbearable burden, bringing him financial and political ruin, with its attendant ill health and discouragement.

But his residence in Cahokia had its compensations and its moments of relief from the hard life of the warrior and Indian agent.

Just across the Mississippi was the little Spanish town of St. Louis. The Spaniards of the Mississippi Valley were on friendly terms with the French; they expected that at any moment war would be declared by Spain against the British; and they were anxious to gain the favor of the Americans. They were far-sighted enough to realize that the revolting Colonies would free themselves from England, and that in the settlement of peace the American domain would, in all probability, extend to the Mississippi River. Therefore, Don Fernando de Leyba, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Louisiana, lost no time in communicating with the dauntless leader of the little band of Big Knives.

Señor de Leyba, grandee of Spain, must have looked forward to his first meeting with the frontier Indian fighter with little enthusiasm. It was one of those diplomatic necessities. The English were bad enough with their cold and stiff formality, but at least they had been trained in polite ways and could be depended upon to observe social niceties. But what of the crude Big Knife? Would he present himself in his grimy, sweat-stained hunting-shirt? Would he spurn knife and fork and wipe his food-smeared hands on the delicate lace and linen that the Señora brought with her to their wilderness court? Would his conversation shatter the refined quiet of the drawing-room like the bellowing of a buffalo bull?

On the other hand, George Rogers Clark did not look forward with pleasure to his meeting with the formal and stilted representative of the Spanish aristocracy. There would be none of the friendly and companionable intercourse, the eager hospitality that he had known, and did frequently long for, in Virginia. But he was the representative of the United States, and he must win for the United States and for the success of his own plans all the good will possible from his nearest neighbors.

Each was agreeably surprised on meeting the other. The Governor was a gay and dashing young man who welcomed the gallant young Colonel into his home for his own sake and in a short time an intimate friendship sprang up between them.

And at the same time George Rogers was forming a deeper attachment. Living with Governor de Leyba and his wife was his sister, Terese. She was very beautiful. Her vivacious daintiness, her black hair, her deep complexion attracted him. And her twinkling black eyes looked into the heart of the fair young giant who led men

and conquered Indians without bloodshed and she took his heart and made it her own. Tradition has it that he courted her and won her. But both of them realized that their marriage would have to be postponed until the war was over, when he, as a rich man, the owner of large estates, could claim her and give her a home such as he had known in Virginia.

At the same time that George Rogers was courting Terese and making treaties with the Indians and affairs in the Illinois country were progressing smoothly, Governor Hamilton in Detroit was fussing and fuming over the loss of his forts and the loss of his savage allies. He determined that at any cost the Big Knives must be run out, even if he should have to lead the expedition himself. And the more he thought about it the more convinced he became that he would lead the expedition. In addition to punishing the Americans, he would build a fort at the mouth of the Ohio that would cut off all trade between New Orleans and Pittsburgh. This would be a severe blow to the frontier settlements in Kentucky as well as the people of western Pennsylvania. Then he would get control of the mouth of the Missouri and with the usual presents try to stir up the Indians of that region and win their friendship away from the Spaniards, so that when the expected war with Spain was declared he would have additional hordes of painted savages to sweep down upon them. Old Hamilton well knew the value of bloodthirsty Indians, and if they committed unmentionable atrocities while on the warpath, which they always did, he excused himself by explaining that they 'got out of hand' or that such things were to be expected in war. Hamilton was called 'the Hair-Buyer' for good reason.

His first step in the preparations for his campaign was

to send word to the Indians that a great war song would be sung at Detroit. He called upon all the braves who wanted war, and he called them in from the tribes of the Miamis, the Chippewas, the Delawares, the Mingoes, the Shawnees, the Ottawas, the Wabash, and the Pottawatomies.

They assembled in response to the bloody promise. They were harangued and given presents of food and firewater, red-handled scalping-knives and little British flags, to 'keep them firm in the King's interest.' And then came the night of the great war dance. The war post was planted deep in the ground and was festooned with the scalps of many victims. As it grew dark, the naked and fiercely painted savages gathered from their camps. In their scalp-locks they had twined feathers and beads and from their belts hung the scalps they had taken in battle or massacre, and each was armed with a long, gory knife and tomahawk. Bright, leaping bonfires were kindled about the war post and the scene of savage horror flickered in the weird light. The heads of the war drums were stretched tight until they sang with the scrape of a sticky thumb. The chiefs gathered at the war post and the young bucks circled about them, while the drums thumped a slow, tentative rhythm. When all was ready, Hamilton, the Hair-Buyer, resplendent in his scarlet uniform and gold braid and followed by some of his officers, pushed through the circle of chanting, swaying savages and advanced to the war post. There he snatched a tomahawk from the hand of one of the chiefs, and with the wild yell of a demon, that would have done credit to any one of the blood-thirsty savages, he drove its head deep into the post. A frenzied howl broke from the throats of the warriors and they leapt in the air, brandishing their weapons

and striking at imagined enemies. And then the Hair-Buyer commenced the war song and the drums throbbed an accompaniment, like the rumble of a distant waterfall. It was a song of weird harmonies and gruesome details. It recounted the bloody feats that had been accomplished in the past. It was a story of war and massacre, of stealthy attacks and sudden killings, of fallen prisoners and cruel, cunning torture. It painted in glowing highlights the warpath that lay ahead, the hardships that would try the bravest among them, but always it showed the glory and honor to be had with the taking of the scalps of the Big Knives. The leaping, squirming, gyrating braves swung round the circle faster and faster, moaning and shrieking, and the sweat poured from their glistening bodies and ran in crazy rivers through the streaks and stripes of their war paint. It was a hideous scene, but the Hair-Buyer smiled when he saw the effect he had produced and thought of the fate he had in store for the Big Knives.

On October 7, Hamilton began his march against Vincennes. He had under his command one hundred and seventy-five white troops, of which nearly two thirds were French militia and the remainder British regulars. In addition to the sixty Indians who began the march at Detroit, he had promises of savage reënforcements as he progressed into the enemy territory. Hamilton was a cautious campaigner, and in marked contrast to George Rogers Clark he sent ahead of him thirty boats of various sizes and types capable in all of carrying over seventy thousand pounds in baggage and men. He carried with him a vast quantity of presents for the Indians with which he was to win back the support of the tribes that had joined the Americans in the councils of Cahokia, and he had cannon for battering down the stout log forts if he

met with too much resistance from the Big Knives. All these arrangements had taken much time and had delayed his start until winter had set in.

Down the Detroit River he came in a bitter blizzard, and as he put across to the mouth of the Maumee the icy gale that swept in from Lake Erie dashed waves and stinging spray over the sides of the boats and canoes until they became so waterlogged that the expedition, half frozen and half drowned, fought for the comfortless refuge of the shore. Up the Maumee they paddled and poled their way. At this time of year the water in the river was low and the channel had shrunk to a narrow trickle because of the encroaching band of ice that extended from either shore. As they neared the headwaters, the shallows and rapids became more numerous, and time after time the boats had to be unloaded so that they could be pulled and pushed over the rocks.

At the head of the Maumee there was a nine-mile portage to the head of the Wabash, over which boats, baggage, and supplies had to be carried on the backs of the men. But by this time the Hair-Buyer had been joined by more of his Indian allies and his force numbered nearly five hundred. At the Indian villages he held councils, and as he had expected his presents were successful in winning over to his side some of the fickle savages who had accepted the belt of peace from the Big Knives. Hamilton, the Hair-Buyer, had a persuasive way with the red man, too, but it was a very different way from that of George Rogers Clark.

And so the expedition progressed. Hamilton, in writing a report to General Haldemand, Commander-in-Chief of Canada, said: 'Nothing very material happened till the 15th of December, when a reconnoitering party from

camp seized a lieutenant and three men sent up by the commandant at St. Vincennes with written instructions to watch for the English and to hasten back with his intelligence.'

The Commandant at Vincennes, as you remember, was Captain Helm, and with him he had only one American soldier, the remainder of his troops being French militiamen who had taken the oath of allegiance from Father Gibault. Up to this time Captain Helm had had no opportunity to test the loyalty of his French comrades, but he feared that their valor was rather that of the parade ground than from a desire to meet the enemy.

The Indians had brought in rumors that a British army was advancing from Detroit, and it was to verify this intelligence that he had sent out the scouts that fell into the hands of Hamilton. So Captain Helm knew nothing of the presence of the enemy until they were within three miles of the fort.

In fairness to the Hair-Buyer, we must say that he disposed his troops for battle so that there was as little likelihood as possible of there being a massacre of the inhabitants *if* they surrendered without resistance. Two companies of Indians were sent down the river to intercept any messages that Helm might try to send to Kaskaskia and the other Indians were held up the river with Hamilton. A major was put in command of the white troops and they were ordered to proceed to the fort and demand its surrender. If they met with resistance, the Hair-Buyer was to bring up his savages and call in the parties from down the river. Hamilton sent a message into the town warning the people that they were to take no part in the fighting unless they were prepared to meet his bloodthirsty savages. His warning had the desired effect.

Captain Helm sat in the fort, deserted by all but one American and a handful of Frenchmen planning to fight it out with the Hair-Buyer unless he were given satisfactory terms. Think of such audacity! With a score of men he was defying the Lieutenant-Governor and an army of five hundred. As it was futile to make preparations, the courageous Captain sat down and hurriedly penned a report to Colonel Clark. His letter is an interesting document.

Dr Sir:

At this time theer is an army within three miles of this place. I heard of their comin several days before hand. I sent spies to find the certainty. The spies being taken prisoners, I never got intelligence till they got within three miles of the town. As I had called the militia, and had all assurance of their integrity, I ordered, at the firing of a cannon, every man to appear; but I saw but few. Capt. Burron behaved much to his honor and credit; but I doubt the certainty of a certain gent. Excuse haste as the army is in sight. My determination is to defend the Garrison, though I have but 21 men but what has left me. I refer you to the (bearer) Mr. Wms, for the rest. The army is within three hundred yd of the village. You must think how I feel; not four men that I can really depend on, but am determined to act brave. Think of my condition. I know it is out of my power to defend the town, as not one of the militia will take arms, though, before sight of the army, no braver men.

Their flag is at a small distance. I must conclude.

Yr Humble servt

Leod Helms

Not a shot had been fired on either side. The cannon was moved into a position in front of the fort gate and the soldiers were deployed for an attack. The Hair-Buyer sent a man forward to demand the surrender of the fort and Captain Helm sent back to know who made the demand. He was told, 'the King's Lieutenant Governor, from Detroit.' Then Hamilton advanced himself, and Captain Helm met him demanding to know what terms he should have. When he was told 'humane treatment,' he opened the gate.

And now from the hand of the Hair-Buyer, the man who led good Indians in war against his fellow white men, we have an account of how he handled these gentle savages.

'I instantly posted sentries at the gate to keep out the savages; [these were the Indians to whom he had sung the war song and made promises of scalps and plunder] but while I attended to this some of them got in at two gun ports which had not been secured. I called to the interpreters and used my best entreaties with the chiefs, who really did all in their power, but the torrent was too strong for such feeble barriers. They bore down the sentries, and, seeing that I had posted another at the door of the commandants quarters, they went to the window which they broke and fell to plundering.'

The Indians should not be blamed for what they did. Had not Hamilton led them six hundred miles on a journey that took over two months through bitter cold and all the hardships of winter travel, led them by the promise of scalps and prisoners for the torture stake? Had he not told them that they were making this march so that they could win distinction among their fellows by their feats of arms? And here he was snatching the prize

from them at the very moment it was in their grasp. But the poor, duped red man behaved remarkably well on this occasion according to the further report of the ruthless Lieutenant-Governor.

'The soldiers in the mean time drew up in front of the fort and were quiet spectators for the disorder, which lasted till the curiosity (I cannot say avarice) of the savages was gratified. They had generously restored to Captain Helm whatever was required of his private property. Some stout horses — 32 lately purchased on the account of the Congress — they found in the fort, which I would not deprive them of, as they have not committed a single act of cruelty and treated the inhabitants with the humanity which was recommended to them. Had a single shot been fired, probably the settlement would have been destroyed in an hours time.'

The British flag replaced the American and the town settled down again under British rule.

The following day Colonel Hamilton called all the French inhabitants together in the church and soundly upbraided them for their disloyalty in going over to the Big Knives and so soon forgetting the benefits they had enjoyed under 'the mildest government under heaven.' The poor Frenchmen would undoubtedly have smiled at such a reference to the rules and regulations of their British Commandants had they not been in terror of their lives, for Governor Hamilton gave them to understand that he held it in his power to hang every one of them that had taken the oath of allegiance to the American cause. But finally, with assumed magnanimity, he told them that he had prepared an oath of allegiance that those might sign who cared to. He implied that all manner of hardships were in store for those who did not

care to. And so, out of 621 men, women and children, 158 signed it. That must have been nearly every male in the place that was old enough to bear arms. Hamilton himself calls it 'humiliating.' But you can judge it for yourself.

'We the undersigned, declare and acknowledge to have taken the oath of allegiance to Congress, in doing which we have forgotten our duty to God and have failed in our duty to man. We ask pardon of God and we hope from the goodness of our legitimate sovereign, the King of England, that he will accept our submission and take us under his protection as good and faithful subjects, which we promise and swear to become before God and before man. In faith of which we sign with our hand or certify with our ordinary mark, the aforesaid day and month of the year 1778.'

Untrustworthy as they were, the luckless French inhabitants were in a hopeless dilemma. They were peace-loving people who had lived for generations among the Indians without making war or being made war upon. Then suddenly came the English and they were coerced into taking an oath against their old king. Then came the Americans, who seemed to offer them a more tolerant rule, and they readily forswore their British masters. And now the British were back, and they knew that their lives and property depended on supporting the temporary master. Therefore, we are not surprised when we learn that less than a fortnight after the fort had surrendered there were two hundred and fifty of the French militia parading before Governor Hamilton.

It was late in December and the weather was growing more severe every day. As the Hair-Buyer looked out upon the rising waters of the Wabash and considered the insurmountable difficulties of a march to Kaskaskia, he

became convinced that the possibility of accomplishing a successful campaign against Colonel Clark before spring was out of the question. And he knew, or thought he knew, that Clark, too, must stay penned up in Kaskaskia until the waters receded from the low country. Therefore, he decided to rebuild and strengthen the fort at Vincennes. He built two large, musket-proof block-houses and made everything secure, and then closed himself up in the fort for the winter, like an old she bear in a hollow tree.

From time to time he sent small bands of marauding Indians down to harass the Kentuckians and to intercept any boats or supplies that might try to get through from the Falls of the Ohio for the relief of Colonel Clark. Part of the Detroit militia and some of the Indians were sent home to wait until the spring offensive. Messages were sent to all the French towns telling them of the coming drive against the Big Knives and warning them that their only safety lay in their steadfast refusal to take up arms in the interest of the Americans or to give them aid of any sort. The old Hair-Buyer then cocked his feet up on the fender in front of the fire and dreamed comfortably and patiently of the coming of spring.

But what of George Rogers Clark at this time?

The message from Captain Helm with the information of the surrender of Vincennes had been intercepted by Hamilton's flanking parties. But when the expected bi-weekly express from Captain Helm did not arrive at Kaskaskia and a further two weeks went by, Colonel Clark became considerably alarmed. Rumors had come through that Hamilton was on the march to the Illinois towns, but nothing definite was known. Clark sent out scouting parties that did not return and this increased his anxiety. Therefore, Clark determined that the best thing

he could do in preparation was to proceed to Cahokia and give instructions to the French inhabitants as to how they should act in the event of an attack, and perhaps he might find a moment to go across the river for a few stolen hours with Terese. He had no intention of trying to defend Cahokia, for he needed Captain Bowman and his thirty Big Knives to reënforce him at Kaskaskia.

About the middle of January he set out with a small guard of six or seven men 'and a few gentlemen in chairs,' on the road to Cahokia. There was a light snow on the ground, but below the frozen surface lay deep, sticky mud and travel was slow and difficult. They had gone about three miles when one of the 'chairs' became badly mired and it was the work of an hour to pull it out and get under way again. At that time the little party did not know that a party of forty French and Indians sent out by Hamilton for the single purpose of taking Clark lay within half a mile of them. And that the scouts of this party were concealed within a hundred yards watching their every move. The only conceivable reason why Clark and the whole party were not captured is that the scouts were too few in number to make good an attack and they were in such a position that they could not return to the main party without being discovered. And Hamilton had given imperative orders that Clark's scalp was not what he wanted, but Clark himself. Before the Big Knives reached their destination — and in fact they never did reach it — they were to have an even greater thrill in store for them.

They arrived at the little town of Prairie du Rocher toward nightfall and the whole town turned out to welcome them. At once the good ladies bustled about and announced that they would give a ball in honor of their

Colonel. They took possession of the largest room at the inn and decorated it with flags and bright-colored bunting. Extra candles and *flambeaux* were brought in. The tables were spread and a worthy feast of the choicest venison, dumplings, parched corn, and delicate French pastry was laid before the visitors. Toasts were drunk in a rich, smooth elderberry wine, and the puckered expressions of anxiety on the faces of these hardy pioneers were replaced by jovial smiles and care-free gayety. When the banquet was over, the tables were cleared and set to one side, the fiddle and the flute were brought out and the company stepped the figures of the stately old quadrille and the more lively measures of the reel.

At midnight the dance was in full swing and there was no thought of retiring. Without warning the door was flung wide and a muffled soldier, flecked with pink and frozen foam from his horse's mouth, stood for a moment blinking in the sudden light. He saw Colonel Clark, rushed to him, saluted, and handed him a message. The Colonel's expression grew grim, and he turned to one of his officers and ordered him to have the horses saddled immediately. Momentarily the dancers had been too surprised to move; now they crowded round him begging to know what had happened. He told them simply that their worst fears had been realized; that Hamilton the Hair-Buyer was reported to be within three miles of Kaskaskia with a force of eight hundred men and was apparently going to attack the town that night; in fact, it was supposed that the attack would be made before the express could reach Prairie du Rocher. However, he was determined to return to the defense of the fort as soon as possible. There was consternation on every face. Some of the men begged him not to risk his life by trying to

force his way through the enemy lines; others urged him to cross the river to the Spanish side, where he would be safe and from whence he might be able to lead a more effective counter-attack. But George Rogers Clark smiled at their suggestions for his safety, pointing out that risk was a part of a soldier's life if by sacrificing that life something could be gained. He thanked them for their interest and told them they were unduly upset and alarmed. He was sorry that their gay party had been so unpleasantly interrupted and suggested that it proceed, at least, until the horses were ready. So he called on the orchestra to strike up and he led a dance as though he had no other concern in the world.

The gallant Colonel's own self-assurance inspired the whole company, and many of the enthusiastic young Frenchmen rushed for their rifles and their horses to follow this brave leader into whatever dangers he might encounter. He took time to scribble a note to Captain Bowman ordering him to come to Kaskaskia with his troops as soon as possible. And then he set out.

The night was black and a bitter wind swept stinging snow across the open prairie. Again and again the hard-breathing horses stumbled as they raced the ghostly shadows of the swirling snow, but the riders, reckless of their own safety, pulled them up with a sturdy rein and dug spurred heels into their flanks. On, on, they pushed at breakneck speed, and with every mile the storm increased until the howling wind choked the thudding hoofbeats and each rider felt himself alone. As they approached the town, they slackened their pace. Except for the storm all was quiet. The only sign of life was a light at the fort. Cautiously they advanced and gave the countersign and were at once admitted.

There the Colonel found more or less confusion. The soldiers were putting things in order for a siege. Some of the leading Frenchmen had gathered there and were discussing their sorry prospects. Neither the French nor George Rogers Clark had the slightest doubt of the proximity of Hamilton and his savages. Outnumbered nearly eight to one, the French saw no possibility of success for the Big Knives, and they feared to lend them their support, for they would then be considered rebels by the British and would forfeit their property and possibly their lives to the conqueror. Clark was convinced that their friendship for the Americans was genuine and no one appreciated better than he the difficulty of their position. But their support was needed, and he had no intention of allowing sentiment to interfere with his plans.

When he called them together the next morning and asked them if they intended to fight for the Big Knives, they replied that after considering the situation fully they had decided that, although they were Americans at heart, they would not take up arms on either side. But they begged him to issue orders commandeering all the supplies he might need to withstand a siege. Colonel Clark was furious at their faithlessness and ordered them out of the fort after telling them he would no longer consider them friends, but now saw clearly that they were his secret enemies. As for their supplies, they could bring them into the fort if they wanted to, but he had every intention of burning those houses that were best stocked so that they would not fall into the hands of the enemy. And to lend color to his threat he fired some of the outhouses nearest the fort, not because they contained stores, but because they would afford protection to the enemy in attacking the fort. But the people thought the furious

Big Knife would put the torch to the whole town, and they begged him, before he did it, to let them bring their supplies and goods into the fort. The success of this move was more than could have been expected, for by nightfall the fort was provisioned to withstand a six months' siege.

That evening Captain Bowman arrived from Cahokia 'with his own company and a company of volunteers,' and the band of Big Knives strutted about as though they hadn't the slightest doubt of their success. The spirits of the impressionable French now revived, but their pride was wounded at seeing a company of militia from Cahokia. Colonel Clark was loud in his praise of the volunteers and made it known that the Frenchmen of Cahokia could be depended upon in time of trouble. At the same time he adopted a policy of consideration toward the inhabitants of Kaskaskia and more than ever strengthened his influence among them.

A few days later, when his spies returned with the news that the great army consisted of not over forty men, white and red, and was retreating as fast as possible toward Vincennes, there was a general easing of anxiety. Colonel Clark decided that Captain Bowman and the militia should go back to Cahokia, but before they set out he had a great banquet prepared and made presents to each man. If the equipment of any one of them was imperfect, they were supplied with new articles from the garrison stores. Also they were presented with 'an elegant set of colors,' and before they left 'paraded about the town, with their new flag and equipments, and viewed themselves as superior to the young fellows of Kaskaskia.' This was a justly humiliating stroke, but it served to make the Kaskaskians decide that they would not be found wanting in a future emergency.

It was not until the last of January that Colonel Clark received any authentic news of the capture of Vincennes. This was from Colonel Francis Vigo, a merchant and partner of Governor de Leyba in some of his ventures with the Indians. Vigo had been at Vincennes on business when Hamilton arrived and was made a prisoner. He was finally allowed to depart on condition that 'he would do nothing to injure the British cause during his journey' to St. Louis. He kept his word faithfully, returning to his home as rapidly as possible, but once there he was absolved from any other obligation to keep from injuring the British cause and hurried at once to Kaskaskia. He had been friendly to the American cause from the time that Clark first came into the country, and no doubt had improved that friendship on Clark's visits to de Leyba at St. Louis. The detailed information that Vigo brought was ample. Clark in writing of it said, 'we got every information from this gentleman that we could wish for, as he had had good opportunity and had taken great pains to inform himself, with a design to give intelligence.'

George Rogers Clark had suspected and now he knew he was in a tight place. He realized that with the coming of spring through Hamilton's efforts the southern Indians would take the warpath; Hamilton would be reënforced by troops from Detroit and his blood-thirsty savages. There was not the chance of a rabbit in the clutches of a hawk of Clark's being able to withstand such numbers. He thought of the advisability of returning to Kentucky and gathering all the available men there to protect their own frontier. But he knew there were not enough men in the whole territory to fight such an army as Hamilton was preparing to lead. If he remained at Kaskaskia, his scalp would become an easy trophy for the Hair-Buyer,

and when he was disposed of, Kentucky would be swept to the inner frontier. And could the inner frontier itself withstand an assault from the Hair-Buyer and his lusty warriors?

The more he thought about it the more he could see but one alternative, and its chances of success were desperately slim. He must attack the enemy before they were ready to attack him. The one thing in his favor was the element of surprise. Hamilton, snugly shut up in his fort at Vincennes, thought that an attack from any quarter was impossible until winter broke and the floods in the low lands receded. No one knew better than Colonel Clark the difficulties and hardships that would have to be met and overcome in leading an army two hundred and forty miles through the 'drowned country' in the dead of winter; an army which, after the fatigues of its march, would have to contend with a force, strongly fortified, of more than three times its number. The plan was fantastic, but it was born of desperation, and the love of the dramatic in George Rogers Clark's make-up must have made the idea of unexpectedly appearing outside the stockade at Vincennes and taking the old Hair-Buyer as he napped by the fire, appeal very strongly to him. And so the march to Vincennes was decided upon.

CHAPTER XI

THE GREAT MARCH TO VINCENNES

The historian, Albert Bushnell Hart, in speaking of Clark's march against Vincennes, describes it as by 'far the most adventurous and daring campaign of the Revolution.'

Francis Vigo arrived at Kaskaskia with his news of the taking of Vincennes on the 29th of January, 1779. The entry in Captain Bowman's journal for the following day shows that no time was lost in deciding on the winter campaign. 'Col. Clark called a council with his officers and it was concluded to go and attack Gov. Hamilton at all events, for fear, if it was let alone till spring, that he with his Indians would undoubtedly cut us all off.'

News of the Big Knife's decision raced through the ranks and through the town like deer stampeding through the woods. Such reckless boldness appealed to the imagination of these frontiersmen, French and American alike, and the self-assurance and determination of the young commander was so infectious that there was little or no thought of possible disaster.

Orderlies and messengers dashed in and out of headquarters in the bustle of preparation. An express was forwarded to Cahokia calling for volunteers. Horses were purchased and 'a pack-horse master [was] appointed and orders to prepare pack-saddles.' Equipment was inspected

and overhauled, and stores were brought out and inspected.

But the most sensational piece of work was the construction and outfitting of a gunboat. The Big Knife was to have his navy as well as an army. Colonel Clark knew only too well that crossing the 'drowned country' with the encumbrance of cannon and powder and ball would be impossible. But there was a water route from Kaskaskia to Vincennes, down the Mississippi, up the Ohio to the Wabash, and thence north to Vincennes. What could be better than to take a large Mississippi boat and mount it with his two four-pounders and his four swivels, put aboard a crew of forty or fifty men with extra supplies and munitions, and send it to join him just below Vincennes as he completed his overland march. The cannon could cover his attack from the river and would help to batter down the walls of the fort if the Hair-Buyer was determined to fight it out. Plans were immediately worked out and necessary orders were given. The work was put in the hands of Captain John Rogers, Clark's cousin, who had been with him from the time the expedition first gathered at Corn Island.

The Frenchmen came to Colonel Clark and put everything they had at his disposal. He expressed no desire but they immediately tried to fulfill it. They were obviously trying to redeem themselves for their actions at the time of the expected attack by Hamilton. Excitement was in the air. The women of the town, young and old, were loud in admiration for their brave commandant. That was all right, for he had the admiration of every one. They talked likewise of the fine brave soldiers and the pity they felt for the hardships they were about to undergo. They looked upon them as ideals of manhood

and heroes, to the complete exclusion of all the Frenchmen. That was more than these young men could stand. So they consulted among themselves and finally went to the Colonel to beg his permission to form a company of volunteers to go along on the great march to Vincennes. Permission was granted, and what was merely excitement before now became delirium. Flags were displayed from every house, and the proud volunteers strutted about the streets like young roosters with their first tail feathers.

By February 3, Captain Rogers had completed his work on the gunboat, the first warship in history to push its nose into the waters of the Ohio. The guns were mounted and everything was stowed snugly aboard her. Then came the ceremony of giving her a name. It was decided to call her the 'Willing,' after James Willing, an American who had made some brilliant raids against British shipping along the Mississippi River. We have no report of the ceremony, but it is easy to imagine what must have taken place. No doubt the whole town turned out, for the launching of a warship was a unique event in most of their lives. Colonel Clark and his officers, followed by a company of soldiers, marched down to the river and the soldiers were drawn up along the bank with their arms at salute. A pretty young French girl took a bottle of wine and, stepping forward, shattered it on the bow of the craft, christening it the Willing. The soldiers fired a salute and the people cheered as the boat took the water. There was much handshaking and every one wished Captain Rogers the greatest possible success.

The next afternoon the newly christened warship set off with a crew of forty-six men on the long, hard river voyage to Vincennes.

The volunteers from Cahokia arrived under Captain

McCarthy, and that evening a farewell banquet was given. The final preparations were made and on the afternoon of February 5, 1779, Colonel George Rogers Clark, mounted on the finest Mexican stallion that had ever been brought into that country, rode at the head of his army of one hundred and twenty-odd men down to the banks of the Kaskaskia River. The drums rolled and the pennants of each company whipped in the rainy wind as the men swung along, splashing through the mud and puddles of standing water. The troops came to a halt at the water's edge, and Father Gibault talked to them of the hardships to come and of the great work in which they were privileged to take part. He urged them to be firm in their resolution and steadfast in their duty. They were men fighting for liberty, and no sacrifice they might be called upon to make should be too great. Then he gave them absolution, standing there in the rain and drizzle, heads bared and bowed, and the now silent townsmen solemnly looked on and murmured a prayer for their success. Farewells were finally said and the little band pushed forward for their great adventure.

That first night they made their camp about three miles from Kaskaskia. It was decided that each company should form in a square, placing what baggage they had in the middle, and thus be ready to defend themselves from a surprise attack by Indians or some of Governor Hamilton's marauding French militia.

Although the weather was mild for February, a cold rain fell most of the time and the men were drenched to the skin. Furthermore, the 'drowned country' was threaded with small streams and creeks, and frequently the water was three feet deep at the places they were forded. These hardy frontiersmen knew the value of

THE MARCH TO VINCENNES

traveling light and had sacrificed the comfort of tents. Imagine yourself wading through water, deep and shallow, all day, with rain dripping from your hat and shoulders and then camping at night on the wet, soggy ground without any shelter and without being able to remove your clothes, having at best a smudgy, smouldering fire over which to try to keep warm. But these men were determined not to allow hardship to turn them aside.

At the beginning of the march, all the officers were mounted, but it was not long before the Colonel, realizing the value of setting an example for his men, used the horse as a baggage animal or gave it to the hunters for their expeditions after game, while he himself splashed and plodded through the mud, encouraging the men and turning every possible situation into something to be laughed about.

The men were allowed to shoot game at every opportunity, and when none was close at hand the companies would send out hunting expeditions to gather a supply sufficient for a feast. The hunters were always supplied with horses, lent them by the officers. There was much rivalry between the companies to see which could prepare the best spread, and each night the company that had done the hunting during the day invited the other men to share their feast.

They gathered about their camp-fires and told stories or sang songs, and their officers joined them, and they tried to pretend that they were merely out on a grand hunt for the pleasure of the chase. And so they forgot their fatigue and the wet, penetrating cold, and if a man grumbled it was quietly and to himself.

The march began every morning at dawn and continued until after dark. And how they marched! In the first six

days they traveled one hundred and seventy-four miles, an average of twenty-nine miles a day. It is almost unbelievable that men on foot carrying baggage, no matter how little it might be, fording streams and wading sloughs, occasionally stopping to fell trees and build rafts when the rivers were too deep or too broad, could make such splendid time. They were now within sixty miles of Vincennes, two thirds of the journey completed. But those remaining twenty leagues had hardships in store for them that made the first part of the march seem like a pleasant afternoon's stroll.

On February 13, they came to the forks of the Little Wabash. At this point the nearer banks of the rivers were three miles apart, and the distance between the high ground on their farther banks is nearly five miles. When the army came in sight of the river there was general speculation as to whether the obstacle that lay before them could be passed, for the two rivers had overflowed their banks, and what they saw was a sheet of water, a long lake five miles across. Even the determined Colonel was momentarily doubtful, but he waved aside such thoughts and ordered a dugout canoe to be built at once, to pick out the shallowest water for a passage by which the army might ford, and select as good a place as might be found on the opposite shore for the camp to be laid after the crossing. Clark, the actor, now went among his men making them believe that he thought the crossing would be in the nature of a lark. The canoe could be used for the baggage and the weak, but he and most of the men would have to wade it.

The following afternoon the boat was finished and immediately men set out to explore the farther shore. When they came back, they reported finding high ground,

but with water never less than two feet deep, and most of the time three or four. They had blazed a trail that could easily be followed, and the troops, in high spirits, made ready to start at dawn.

Fortunately the next morning was not bitterly cold, though it was still raining, when the men with their baggage and horses took to the water. It was a severe ordeal — men plunging into cold water waist deep, fully clothed, and carrying the long, heavy rifle and a back-pack; wading on a soft, marshy bottom, sometimes slipping into holes that brought the water splashing around the neck. But such was the spirit of their leader that the men laughed and joked about their plight and finally scrambled out on the wet, slippery bank. They marched a very few yards farther and came to another river into which they plunged without hesitation, directing their march 'to gain and take possession of the nearest height they could discover.'

Now, to add to their discomfort, the provisions were running low. In a country where the rivers spread to lakes and only an occasional hill pokes its soggy brow above the water, there is no game to be had, and they had advanced so far into the 'drowned lands' that the herds of deer and buffalo were well out of their reach. But neither hunger nor discomfort seemed to depress these men who had gained the hardy name of Big Knives. On the 16th of February they marched all day through rain and water. 'By evening we found ourselves encamped on a pretty height, in high spirits, each laughing at the other in consequence of something that had happened in the course of this ferrying business, as they called it, and the whole at the exploit ... they thought that they had accomplished. In this, a little antic drummer afforded them great diversion by floating on his drum. All this was greatly en-

couraged, and they really began to think themselves superior to all men, and that neither the rivers nor the seasons could stop their progress. Their whole conversation now was what they would do when they got about the enemy, and they now began to view the main Wabash as a creek, and made no doubt but such men as they were could find a way to cross it. They wound themselves up to such a pitch that they soon took Vincennes, divided the spoil, and before bed-time were far advanced on their route to Detroit!'

The Colonel, however, did not share the same enthusiasm, for he realized better than they that they were now deep in the enemy country with no possibility of retreat if they should be discovered, and that the enemy, equipped with boats and canoes, could attack and slaughter them without their being able to make any resistance. Provisions were nearly gone and there was little likelihood of procuring any before they reached Vincennes. They had crossed miles of water, some of it deep, but deeper water lay ahead, and the passage of the Wabash seemed a problem that could be solved only if Captain Rogers aboard the Willing were able to keep his rendezvous. Orders had already been given that no rifles were to be fired except in case of necessity, for powder and shot were running low. Captain Rogers had a reserve supply on the boat, but what if it should not meet them? Could they still attack the Hair-Buyer? The Big Knife put these thoughts aside as best he could, and the next morning they marched on.

On the 17th four men were sent out to scout the country about Vincennes and, if possible, to steal some boats with which to ferry the men across the Embarrass River where it flows into the Wabash. Toward evening the main column reached the place where they thought the river ought

to be, but the banks of both rivers for miles around were under water, and it was impossible to trace the course of either stream in this immense lake. When the sun set there was not an acre of dry land to be seen, and the men had not had a mouthful of food all day. Doggedly they splashed through the dark until 'late in the night' they found a bit of dry land where they could throw themselves down, exhausted and supperless, for a few hours' sleep. They were now within nine miles of Vincennes, and their courage was still high. Colonel Clark could say, 'we were much amused, for the first time, by hearing the morning gun from the British garrison.'

The reconnoitering party returned with the news that it was impossible to cross the Embarrass and therefore they had not been able to find any boats. Colonel Clark now led his men down the Embarrass to its mouth and there found a place to camp. A raft was built and four men started out to steal boats. But the men in camp were not idle. Colonel Clark knew that unless they could get out of their present situation within a day or two, the whole army would perish, so he ordered canoes to be made. Some of the French volunteers, worn and hungry, began to talk of turning back and came to the colonel with the suggestion. He laughed at them. He neither ordered them nor tried to persuade them not to make the attempt. Instead he disdainfully told them to go out and kill some deer.

The next afternoon the men with the raft returned only to report that they had been unable to find either dry land or boats. The first of the canoes now being completed, Captain McCarthy with three men set out on a similar expedition — boats seemed an absolute necessity to save the army from complete disaster. But they soon

returned empty-handed. Having found a party of white men and Indians encamped about three miles away, they dared not risk discovery. The famished men bent all their efforts to finishing the canoes and tried to forget their faintness and hunger in their work.

On the next day, the 20th, two things happened that brought some encouragement. About noon one of the sentries at the river managed to capture a boat with five Frenchmen in it from Vincennes. They brought the good news that no one suspected the proximity of the Big Knives. Also they gave information about the strengthening of the fort and said that the French inhabitants of the town would welcome the return of the Big Knives. But they were doubtful of the ability of the army to advance until the waters receded. The men scoffed at the idea that they could be held up for long after what they had already been through.

But the most important thing that happened that day was the killing of a deer. One deer, the first food that the camp had had in three days, and it had to feed one hundred and thirty starving men!

The weather now turned cold and ice formed on the still water. Clark decided that cold or not they must advance. He took a canoe and made for a little island covered with maples about three miles away, but found the intervening water about five feet deep. When he returned, the men were gathered to hear what he had to say. Before he spoke to them he spoke gravely to one of his officers. The men did not hear what he said, but noted his demeanor and jumped to the conclusion that all was lost. Clark seeing their alarm did not hesitate, but dipped up some water in his hands, mixed a little powder with it, and smeared his face like an Indian on the warpath. Then he

gave a wild war-whoop and without saying another word marched off into the water. The men were dumbfounded. Had their Colonel gone mad? Mad or not, they would follow him. As they half waded, half swam, through the icy water, the men about Clark took up one of their favorite songs and a moment later it ran back through the ranks.

At length the island was reached and the numbed men pulled themselves out of the water onto the half-frozen mud. But the sky was clear and the sun bright and the weak somewhat revived as they were helped by the strong.

That night was bitterly cold and the wet clothing of the soldiers froze stiff. The feeble fires were scarcely more than an aggravation that lighted the huddled figures of the fatigued and famished men, but gave them little warmth. There was not a mouthful of food to be had. If the pain of hunger grew too great, they took scant comfort in drawing up their belts another hole, and when the pain of frost-bitten hands and feet seemed unbearable, they could move about in the hope of starting up their sluggish circulation.

When the morning of the 23d dawned brilliantly clear, Colonel Clark called all the men about him and pointed across four miles of water that stretched to a little wooded island. This, he told them, would bring them in sight of their goal, and then their bitter hardships would be over. To attack the British and the Indians would be a joyful diversion after their experiences of the past two weeks. To give the enemy battle such as he had never known was the consuming desire of the Big Knives. Not only were they about to fight to avenge the ruthless attacks and massacres perpetrated on their frontier homes, but they were going to justify their own suffering on the mid-

winter march from Kaskaskia. The Colonel looked with affection at his worn, uncomplaining men. The muscles at his throat tightened. Without another word he turned away and, breaking the ice at the shore, he plunged into the water. A cheer rose from the men and one by one they followed him.

In writing of this last day's march, George Rogers Clark says, 'This was the most trying of all the difficulties we had experienced.' The canoes made for the land and discharged their cargoes. Then they returned to the column to help the weak and exhausted. Weaving in and out among the men they gave support to many who were too weak to stagger on. When about halfway across the flood, Colonel Clark, himself, began to think that he could not go on and he knew that many of the men were less sturdy than he. A strapping soldier beside him slipped an arm about his shoulder and steadied his commander. But Clark's thought was for his men. If they knew that land was near, the weaker ones might summon enough strength to make it. So, as they were approaching the woods, he sent some of the strongest ahead with instructions to cry out that they had discovered dry land the moment they came to the tangle of trees. It was a ruse, but it had the effect that the Colonel wanted. The moment the half-drowned men heard the cry of 'Land!' strength born of desperation came to them, and they grimly splashed on. 'But the water never got shallower, but continued deepening. Getting to the woods, where they expected land, the water was up to my shoulders. But gaining those woods was of great consequence. All the low men, and weakly, hung to the trees and floated on the old logs until they were taken off by the canoes.'

But land was reached at last. And it 'was a delightful

spot of ground of about ten acres.' Some of the men on reaching it were too weak from exhaustion to climb out of the icy water and slipped, unconscious at the very moment of safety. But their more husky companions pulled them out and built fires and chafed their numbed bodies until life struggled back into their veins. They smiled a bit wanly at first, but their jaws were set with a grim determination that could not be thwarted so long as a spark of life remained.

And then a bit of luck came their way in the shape of a canoe being paddled up to town by some squaws. The canoe was captured and in it they found a quarter of buffalo, some corn, and some tallow, as well as some kettles in which to cook it. The fires were already burning and in a few minutes there rose the savory odor of steaming broth. The weather had moderated somewhat and the sun was warm. Immediately the high spirits of the soldiers returned.

The fort was not yet in sight. There still remained one narrow but deep channel to cross, and during the course of the afternoon the men were taken over in the canoes. This was Warriors' Island, and from its farther shore the men feasted their eyes on the town two miles away. At last it was in their grasp. All thoughts of their suffering were gone. *All that remained now was to capture it!*

CHAPTER XII

THE BIG KNIVES TAKE VINCENNES

The little town that lay across the river in the slanting winter sunlight was a scene of peaceful security. The Saint George ensign stirred broodingly above Fort Sackville, keeping a sleepy watch over the huddled cabins of the town. To the south rose river bluffs, now purpling in the evening haze, and to the north was a gray forest of hardwoods with dead leaves hanging motionless from their skeleton arms. Stretching from Warriors' Island to the edge of the settlement was an undulating plain covered for the most part by a flat sheet of water. This lake was dotted by flocks of ducks and geese and the silence was broken only by their quacking and the occasional report of a hunter's gun.

One of these fowlers sat his horse quite unsuspectingly within a half-mile of the army of Americans who were peering through the brush of Warriors' Island. Clark sent for some of his French volunteers to go out and capture the unsuspecting hunter and bring him back in such a casual manner that none of the other hunters would be alarmed. This was done, and it was indeed a surprised and amazed young Frenchman that was brought before the chief of the Big Knives. The only additional information he was able to give was that the British had finished

work on their fort that very afternoon and that 'there were a good many Indians in town.' But he insisted that no one knew of the approach of the Big Knives.

The Colonel's first thought was to wait until after dark and make the surprise of his attack complete by falling on the town after the people had retired. On the other hand, he knew that most of the French inhabitants favored the American cause above the British, and that if he warned the people of his coming, they would probably not join in the fighting. Furthermore, to send word of the coming attack would convince, not only the people of the town, but Hamilton and the garrison that he had an army sufficiently strong to overpower any resistance they might make. And in looking about him on Warriors' Island he saw the possibilities of a ruse that would lend conviction to such a belief. Audacity and boldness had been the key of his success thus far; they should now carry him on to destruction or victory.

He called for paper and pen and wrote the following message to the people of Vincennes:

GENTLEMEN: Being within two miles of your village with my army, being determined to take your fort this night and not being willing to surprise you, I take this step to request of such of you as are true citizens and willing to enjoy the liberty I bring you, to remain still in your houses, and that those, (if any there be) that are friends to the King of England will instantly repair to the fort and join his troops and fight like men and that if such should hereafter be discovered that did not repair to the garrison, they may depend on severe punishment. On the contrary, those that are true friends of Liberty may expect to be well treated as such. I once more request that they keep

out of the streets, for every person found under arms on my arrival will be treated as an enemy.

G. R. Clark

The Frenchman who had been taken prisoner was now dispatched to the town with the message, and Clark and his officers watched through their glasses with anxious impatience. Soon they could see people running through the streets and gathering on the commons, men dashed here and there on horseback spreading the alarm — or was it good news? — that the Big Knives were coming. The people of Vincennes strained their eyes toward Warriors' Island for a view of the army. The messenger said that he had seen but a few men, but from the things he had overheard he was convinced that the Commandant was leading an army of at least a thousand men against them.

From where Clark lay the commons were in full view, but the walls of the fort were hidden by intervening houses. From what he could see of the fort, he could distinguish no sign of alarm or disturbance. Neither drum nor bugle had been sounded, nor had a warning gun been fired. The fort lay quiet and unperturbed, apparently confident in the security of its new block-houses. Clark began to suspect that news of his coming had reached Hamilton in spite of the information given him by his prisoners and that a warm reception was already prepared for him. If this were the case, he would, at any rate, give them something to think about.

While the army had waited concealed on the Island, several other hunters with their horses had been brought in; enough to supply mounts for Clark and his officers. Some of the soldiers had been detailed to cut a quantity of long saplings to be used as poles for mounting the pen-

nants of the different divisions and companies of the army. It fortunately happened that, in their martial enthusiasm, the people at Kaskaskia and Cahokia had made and presented numerous pennants and flags to every squad of men, with the result that there were enough on hand to outfit an army of ten thousand. Between the Island and the town were some rises of ground eight or ten feet above the level of the plain that served to obstruct the view of the townspeople as to what went on beyond. The far end of the high ground was also out of sight of the town. So George Rogers Clark, the lover of the dramatic, determined to make the most of the pennants and the rolling country and make his great bluff seem the more real.

Just as the whole scene was beginning to fade into the dusk, the watchers in the town saw the head of the column emerge from the woods and brush of Warriors' Island. First came some officers mounted on high-stepping horses, then followed squad after squad of swinging soldiers with pennants flapping in the evening breeze. For a couple of hundred yards the soldiers were in full view of the people on the commons, then the column wound down behind the rise in the ground. Although the soldiers could not now be seen, the pennants on top of the poles still flapped above the ground and continued to advance.

What the bewildered people of Vincennes could not see was that the moment the soldiers were out of sight behind the dip in the ground, all of them except the man bearing the pennant turned and ran back to the woods on the Island, where they were re-formed into new squads, and with other pennants at their head again paraded before the town. Officers dashed back and forth along the column and made the few horses they had taken begin to appear like a troop of cavalry. This marching and counter-

marching continued until what appeared to be a thousand men had passed for the inspection of the throng on the commons. The civilians and soldiers of Vincennes did not suspect that, instead of a thousand well-equipped, well-conditioned soldiers, they had really reviewed the army of the Big Knives ten times.

It was eight o'clock by the time the army gained the heights back of the town, and the night was black. So far there had been no indication from the fort that they knew of the presence of an enemy, and this somewhat disturbed Colonel Clark.

Lieutenant Baily was ordered to take fourteen men and advance directly to the fort, where he was to open fire. The rest of the army was deployed until the town was nearly surrounded. Every soldier was now the frontiersman and Indian fighter. Not a sound was heard as they slipped noiselessly from shadow to shadow, taking advantage of the protection of every tree or fallen log. The town itself was ominously quiet. Here and there a dog barked and the wind moaned in the trees, but the noises that men make were absent. The black streets were empty; not a light showed at any window. It was a deserted village, a village of the dead.

Colonel Clark and the men waited at their stations for what seemed to them an endless time. They began to wonder if the Lieutenant and his men had fallen into an ambush and had been overpowered by the Indians. But suddenly the stillness was shattered by a volley of shots that was immediately followed by a wild and blood-chilling war-whoop. It was Lieutenant Baily's party beginning the attack with a vengeful yell imitated from the forest savages. In it was all the pent-up hate, the memory of barbarously brutal attacks on defenseless women and

children, the keen and racking suffering of these men who had laughed at starvation and fatigue for a chance to lay their hands on the merciless Hair-Buyer. The shout was echoed by the tense, waiting men lying in the shadows at the edge of the town as they jumped to their feet and carried pandemonium from end to end of the village. The fierce fury of the attack was so noisy and unrestrained that the British soldiers thought that it was some of their Indian allies crazy with too much drink, until one of them stepped to a loophole to look out of the fort and was shot by a Big Knife rifle.

These were no drunken Indians who were firing with such deadly accuracy. The alarm spread; drum and bugle now mustered the men to their posts; lights flickered, and the shouts of men taken completely by surprise could be heard by the besiegers outside the stockade; the old Hair-Buyer had been caught napping.

So the Big Knives had come to him, thought Hamilton. So much the better. He would give them a dose of medicine right now that would be a promise of the bitter prescription he was preparing for the spring and summer. He gave immediate orders that the cannon should be manned and he would wipe out these venturesome Big Knives with a few well-placed shots. The soldiers obeyed their officers' commands and the cannon were loaded, but no sooner were the ports that shielded them raised than the frontiersmen poured in a volley that cut down the gunners before they had an opportunity to take aim or apply the match. The officers cursed, and the wounded and dead were carried away. They would try it again. And again there were dead and wounded. And each time the Americans fired a volley, the men held in reserve in the other parts of town shouted and laughed at the sport their com-

rades were having. The British soldiers contrived to fire the cannon at last, but they could not be aimed, and the only damage they did was to knock down a few houses in the town. The gun-ports were so badly placed that the frontiersmen could lie within twenty yards of them without danger of being hit. So much for the Hair-Buyer's artillery; it was useless.

The British soldiers soon found that they had little chance of fighting back against these fiendish sharpshooters. They could not put a rifle to a loophole without drawing a rain of lead. Even the chinks and cracks between the logs of which the fort was made were bulls'-eyes to the frontiersmen through which they poured a deadly cross-fire. And how many of these Big Knives were there? There must be an army of at least a thousand. At any moment they expected to be stormed. They could catch an occasional glimpse of men working at the river-bank thirty yards from the fort. At what moment would they be sapped?

And while the battle raged, Colonel Clark was making himself familiar with the town. Captain Bosseron, the Frenchman who had led the militia of Vincennes against the fort the previous summer when Father Gibault had come to them from Kaskaskia, and who had been a staunch friend of the Big Knives from the moment he had taken the oath of allegiance, sought out the Colonel as soon as possible and offered him the support of men and powder. Powder, above all things, was what the Big Knives needed, but Colonel Clark had supposed that the British had taken all of it from the Frenchmen and carried it into the fort. Then Captain Bosseron explained that when the British had come, he and some of his friends had taken a large quantity of both powder and shot and buried it. Now it was at the disposal of the Big Knives.

Chief Tobacco's Son, the Grand Door of the Wabash, who had made peace with Captain Helm on his arrival at Vincennes, was near the town, and he sent word to Colonel Clark that if the Colonel would give his consent he himself would lead a hundred braves to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Big Knives. But valuable as this reënforcement would have been, George Rogers Clark could not bring himself to depart from his principle of never permitting the red man to fight the battles of the white man. He sent back word to Tobacco's Son that, as there were many hostile Indians in the neighborhood, he felt there would be an undue opportunity for trouble if the Indians were to join forces with the Big Knives, particularly in the dark. And he asked instead that the Chief would favor him 'with his counsel and company during the night, which was agreeable to him.'

Colonel Clark now discovered that some hunters or Indians had brought in word to the fort during the afternoon that they had found evidence of a party of Big Knives on the little island where Clark's men had been the day before. Colonel Hamilton supposed that it was merely a scouting party from the Falls of the Ohio and had ordered a captain with twenty men to go out and capture the rebels. These men were now somewhere hovering around the town trying to effect an entrance into the fort. And now, instead of being the hunters, they were the hunted, for Colonel Clark sent out a party to bring them in. They were too wary. Only a few fell into the hands of the Big Knives. One of these was a renegade Frenchman by the name of Maisonville, who was noted for leading parties of Indians in successful massacres along the frontier. Why the soldiers spared his life when they knew the atrocities he had perpetrated is a mystery. They

gave themselves only the satisfaction of taking his scalp-lock.

As the night wore on and Captain Lamothe was yet at large, Colonel Clark decided there was greater wisdom in allowing him to return to the fort than keeping him away from it. Captain Lamothe, too, was a leader of the Indians, and the Colonel feared that if he were kept out of the fort he might stir up some of the hostile tribes that were, at the moment, waiting and watching to see what would happen; or he might even send word to Detroit for relief, and the Big Knives were not prepared to fight an enemy inside and outside of the fort at the same time.

So, shortly after dawn, the Colonel ordered all firing to stop and had his troops withdrawn from the immediate vicinity of the stockade. They were given orders that, unless they were certain of taking the whole of the party or killing every last man, they were not to fire a shot, but allow them to make good their entrance.

As suddenly as the firing had started, it now stopped. This peculiar action of the Big Knives mystified the Hair-Buyer. His soldiers reported that not a frontiersman was to be seen and that nothing they did would draw the fire of the enemy. The whole village was quiet and dark as it had been before the fierce whoop that had heralded the coming of the Americans. Governor Hamilton began to think that the whole thing had been a frightful nightmare, but that would not account for the dead and wounded. Then the sentinel heard the familiar signal given by Captain Lamothe, and he cautiously looked over the rampart to see men of the British force standing below. Immediately ladders were thrown down and the hunted raiding party began to scramble up them like frightened squirrels chased by a dog. The sight of these terrified Britishers was too

much for the frontiersmen who lay concealed on their arms and they broke into a long laughing cheer that broke the stillness of the night like a joyous war-whoop. The redcoats were so startled that some of them tumbled over the stockade into the fort and others fell backwards to the ground, which only increased the amusement of the Big Knives. When, at last, they were all safely inside, the soldiers resumed firing, and Colonel Clark remarks that there was 'a continual blaze around the garrison' which kept up until shortly before daylight.

The men on the American firing line were relieved at regular intervals, not to have the much-needed rest they deserved, but to join in digging trenches and preparing breastworks that would give them the protection the darkness now afforded them. By the time the sky began to turn gray in the east, the fortifications of the besiegers were ready, and the men were withdrawn from their positions immediately under the walls of the fort. The Hair-Buyer, peering out through chinks in the stockade, discovered that he was in the center of a ring of earthworks bristling with the menacing long rifles of the Big Knives. Although the fire of the Americans was not so hot as it had been during the night, it had become more deadly, and the Hair-Buyer found himself in a position where he could not fight back. He had not yet been able to determine the numbers in the American army and he scarcely desired to risk a sortie. Although he knew that Colonel Clark was supposed to be in command, he could not make himself believe that Clark had actually been able to lead his Big Knives across the 'drowned lands' from Kaskaskia, so he supposed that the army facing him must be from the Falls of the Ohio, and surely, he thought, not even the Americans would risk an attack on Fort Sack-

ville, garrisoned by British regulars, with a force of less than five hundred. If he were to judge from the noise and fury of the night's action, he could not doubt that there were double that number waiting for the proper moment to storm his position and carry it with the bloody horror of the scalping-knife. How he wished his expected reënforcements would arrive from Detroit! He knew that there were ten boats loaded with supplies and manned by alert Canadian frontiersmen already floating down the Wabash. If only word could be got to them and they could strike this Big Knife enemy on the flank! Perhaps the wily old fighter could yet give these settlers from Kentucky a lesson for their impertinence.

But Colonel Clark, too, was making plans, for he knew that if the fort were to be taken at all, it must fall soon. He was not prepared to give the Hair-Buyer an extended siege. Furthermore, he had learned that the British had taken two prisoners carrying mail and dispatches, and he did not want these destroyed if it could be helped. A large measure of his success so far had been the result of his assumed bravado. He would try it on the Hair-Buyer. So he sat down and wrote a note to Colonel Hamilton.

Sir [he said], in order to save yourself from the impending storm that now threatens you I order you to immediately surrender yourself up with all your Garrison, Stores, &c, &c., for if I am obliged to storm, you may depend upon such treatment justly due to a Murderer. Beware of destroying stores of any kind, or any papers or letters that is in your possession, or hurting one house in the town, for by heavens if you do there shall be no mercy shewn you.

G. R. Clark

The messenger with a white flag appeared on the firing line and the rifles were quiet. He advanced confidently to the gate of the fort and was admitted.

Colonel Hamilton read the peremptory message and fumed at the audacity of this uncouth Big Knife. A murderer, was he? Why, the message wasn't even civil. At length he penned a curt reply.

Governor Hamilton begs to acquaint Col. Clark that he and his Garrison are not disposed to be awed into any action unworthy of British subjects.

H. Hamilton

Colonel Clark smiled when he read the answer to his note. It was much as he had expected and he was quite satisfied, for he had accomplished two things. He had relieved his own mind by telling Colonel Hamilton what he thought of him and during the truce he had withdrawn the soldiers from the firing line and given them a good hot breakfast and a few minutes of relaxation before the fighting was to be resumed.

This was the first meal the men had had for five days, and it put new life into them. They went back to their trenches with enthusiasm. Captain Bowman wrote that this was 'fine sport for the sons of Liberty.' In fact, their enthusiasm was so keen that their officers had the greatest difficulty in keeping them from storming the fort regardless of the hazard. But Colonel Clark knew that he could not afford to lose men in any futile attack.

About noon a white flag appeared at the fort and a man advanced with a message for Colonel Clark. The old Hair-Buyer had laid his plans. Colonel Clark read it with surprise.

Lt. Govr. Hamilton proposes to Col. Clark a truce for three days, during which time there shall be no defensive work carried on in the garrison, on condition that Col. Clark shall observe on his part a like cessation of any offensive work; that he wishes to confer with Col. Clark as soon as can be and further proposes that whatever may pass between them two and any other person mutually agreed upon to be present, shall remain a secret till Matters be finally concluded as he wishes that whatever the result of their conference may be to the honor and credit of each party. If Col. Clark makes a difficulty of coming into the fort, Lt. Govr. Hamilton will speak to him before the Gate.

24*th Feb'y* 1779

Colonel Clark called his officers and discussed the message with them. How a three days' truce would help the Big Knives! It would give the men the rest they so badly needed, and, better still, in less than three days the gunboat with their supplies and cannon would undoubtedly join them and they would be in a position to carry the fort by storm. Such a respite seemed to be, in every way, an advantage for the Big Knives; but what could it mean to the British?

Though he had received no information, Colonel Clark shrewdly suspected that the Hair-Buyer was anticipating reënforcements, for he could imagine no other advantage that would come to Hamilton by delaying the battle for three days. And if he did accept such a truce would it not seem like an admission on his part that he was not as strong as he pretended to be? He had made his bluff, but the old Hair-Buyer could not call it as simply as that. He replied:

Col. Clark's compliments to Mr. Hamilton and begs leave to inform him that Col. Clark will not agree to any other terms than that of Mr. Hamilton's surrendering himself and Garrison Prisoners at discretion. If Mr. Hamilton is desirous of a conference with Col. Clark, he will meet him at the Church with Capt. Helms.

Unconditional surrender was the demand of the Big Knives. Though this was the second time it had been made, Hamilton could scarcely believe it. And unless they were willing to delay a few days, his plan of getting reënforcements was useless. Were they strong enough, he wondered, to take the fort by storm? He did not believe it, but the tone of the Big Knife carried an alarming assurance in his own strength and ability.

While the eyes of the soldiers and their officers were fixed on the fort, the gate opened and three men marched out toward the little Catholic church. Two of them wore the bright red uniforms of British officers in brilliant contrast to the frontier clothing of the third. They were Colonel Hamilton and Major Hay, and the third was Captain Leonard Helm. Colonel Clark, with Captain Bowman, now went to the church for this conference on which, they both well knew, depended the success or failure of the whole campaign. But they walked with the assurance of men who never capitulated with failure.

The two parties had scarcely finished their formal greetings when they were interrupted by a war-whoop from a band of Indians coming across the commons in the town. Both Colonel Clark and Colonel Hamilton recognized the party as one that Hamilton had sent out some time before to raid and massacre the Kentucky settlements. But Colonel Clark had had news of their coming and had ordered

Captain Williams to give them a proper reception. When a successful war party returned from an expedition, it was the custom of the British to send out some soldiers to escort them into the fort. These savages had taken many scalps, and they had two prisoners with them, and as they came across the commons they were shouting their song of victory, waving scalps above their heads and beating their breasts, for they were great warriors. And they appreciated the courtesy of the large number of soldiers that were advancing across the commons to meet them. But the two parties had met before the Indians discovered their mistake. At a signal the soldiers let their whirling tomahawks crash into the skulls of the savages. Several were killed instantly and many others wounded, while six were taken prisoners. Their shout of victory was suddenly turned into a cry of consternation and their British allies did not raise a finger in their defense. Even the great Hair-Buyer looked on from the steps of the church; he who had sung the war song with them at Detroit and bragged of the all-powerful English King who would protect his red people; he had done nothing to warn them of their danger.

Captain Williams marched his six captives over to Colonel Clark and asked what he should do with them. The Colonel ordered them to be tomahawked beneath the walls of the fort, immediately. He knew that such an action would deeply impress the other Indians with the weakness and boastfulness of the British rather than incense them against the Big Knives. Captain Williams, who had every reason to believe that one of the gory scalps that hung from the savages' belts had been taken from his brother, asked the Colonel's permission to tomahawk the prisoners himself. This was granted. Those fiercely

painted savages turned looks of disgust and reproach on the Hair-Buyer as they were led away to their execution.

The incident over, the conference between the officers began. Colonel Hamilton covered his chagrin as best he could and offered signed articles of capitulation to Colonel Clark. If Clark was surprised at this move, he did not show it, but took the paper and read it carefully, paragraph by paragraph. This was not unconditional surrender. One of the articles stipulated that the soldiers and officers should be paroled and allowed to go to Pensacola; Pensacola, one of the most important British bases in the south. But the very tone of the paper showed that the Hair-Buyer was badly scared and did not want to have to defend the fort against an attack if he could gain more by a conditional surrender. Colonel Clark handed the paper back to him and repeated that the only terms he would consider were those he had twice sent him already.

With all the assurance he had shown when surrounded by savage red warriors at Cahokia, the Chief of the Big Knives now explained to the Hair-Buyer that it must be obvious to him that the fort could not withstand a determined attack by his army. He pointed to the Indians that had just been put to death and called attention to the scalps that they had taken. Would his men, who had suffered unspeakable hardships to reach Vincennes for the one object of avenging the barbarous and bloody massacres and murders that had been perpetrated on their friends and families in the Kentucky settlements, show any mercy to those who had instigated these attacks after they had been forced to pull down the fort to get at them? Did Colonel Hamilton believe that his army would consent for a moment to these men marching away, with their flags flying and rifles across their shoulders, to stir up

trouble elsewhere, when by one effort they could be put out of the way forever?

At this point Captain Helm, who knew the condition of Clark's army much better than did Colonel Hamilton, and knew the condition of the sturdy fort better than Colonel Clark or Captain Bowman, begged Colonel Clark to reconsider his first determination of an unconditional surrender. He was the only man who realized that there was little or no possibility of the Big Knives pulling down Fort Sackville; and he knew that it was provisioned to withstand a six months' siege if necessary. Colonel Clark understood what he meant, but he had taken Hamilton's measure and he felt he could bluff the old Hair-Buyer out of his fort if he could not throw him out of it. So Colonel Clark gently rebuked Captain Helm by telling him that he was a British prisoner and could not join in the discussion with propriety. Colonel Hamilton very graciously offered to give up his prisoner immediately. But Colonel Clark replied that he would not accept the Captain back at that time and that he would have to return to the fort and take whatever chance befell him. This, too, made its impression on the Hair-Buyer. Colonel Clark then told Hamilton that, as they could reach no agreement, the interview had better terminate and they had better all get back to their arms and put the decision to the test of battle. They saluted and turned to leave.

They had each gone but a few steps when Colonel Hamilton turned and asked the Big Knife if he would be willing to give his reason for refusing to accept the surrender of the fort on any terms other than 'at discretion.' Colonel Clark replied that he had no objection to giving his reason. He knew that most of the Indian partisans, the white leaders of the Indians, were now in Fort Sack-

ville, and he wanted an excuse for putting them to death or otherwise dealing with them as he saw fit when they should fall into his hands. 'The cries of the widows and fatherless on the frontiers... required their blood from my hands,' he said.

What Clark had said was the truth, but he had made his remarks particularly for the benefit of Major Hay, Hamilton's aide.

'Pray, sir,' said Colonel Hamilton, 'who is it that you call Indian partisans?'

'Sir,' replied the Big Knife, 'I take Major Hay to be one of the principal ones.'

Hay, the renegade American from Pennsylvania, had the skulking courage and cunning to lead painted redskins to ravage and massacre the frontier settlements of his own kinsmen, but he had none of the moral courage that makes men face death with calmness and indifference. So when Colonel Clark mentioned his name, his face grew ashen and he trembled like a cornered rat. Governor Hamilton blushed with mortification at such conduct from one of his officers, yet there was nothing he could say. In this somewhat trying situation, George Rogers Clark's sympathy went out to Hamilton, and, to bring the conference to a conclusion, he told the Governor that he would reconsider the terms he had made, and if he and his officers came to any other decision a flag would be sent to the fort. If not, there would be a signal by the drum and hostilities would recommence. Hamilton readily agreed to this, and the officers parted.

Colonel Clark now called his officers to him and after careful consideration new articles of surrender were drafted. Again the bold and reckless gesture and the dramatic sense of the Big Knife had won the encounter.

The character of George Rogers Clark, as we know it from other incidents of his life on the frontier, would make it seem probable that he had never planned anything worse for the 'Indian partisans' than to make them prisoners and send them back to Virginia; that is, if they were taken on the surrender of the fort. They would, of course, have been shot down without hesitation had they been encountered leading a party of raiding Indians. But above all things the Chief of the Big Knives understood the mental processes of the men he dealt with, whether it was Patrick Henry, the savage on the warpath, or Hamilton, the Hair-Buyer; and understanding them, he played on their fear, their love, their hate, their loyalty, and their pride as occasion demanded, and the outcome was always in the interest of the ideal for which he was fighting.

The new articles were sent to the fort under a flag.

1st. That Lt. Govr. Hamilton engages to deliver up to Col. Clark Fort Sackville as it is at present with all stores, Ammunition, &ca.

2nd. The Garrison will deliver themselves up Prisoners of War & to march out with their arms, accoutrements, Knapsacks &ca.

3rd. The Garrison to be delivered up to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock.

4th. Three days to be allowed to the Garrison to settle their accounts with the traders of this place and the inhabitants.

5th. The officers of the Garrison to be allowed their necessary baggage, &ca.

G. R. Clark

By the time the articles of surrender were sent to the fort, it was late in the afternoon, and Colonel Clark did not

want to undertake the necessary arrangements for handling his prisoners as dusk was coming on. He further realized that, except for a few guards and patrols, his men could get a night of rest which they sorely needed and would be the better able to meet their new responsibilities in the morning.

In due course Captain Helm came from the fort gate with the articles signed by Colonel Hamilton. He had written:

Agreed to for the following reasons... The remoteness from succors, the State and Quality of provisions, &c, the Unanimity of Officers and men on its expediency, the Hon^{ble} terms allowed, & lastly the confidence in a generous enemy.

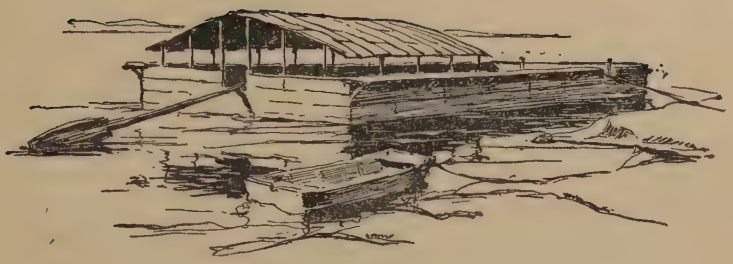
H. Hamilton,
Lt. Govr. & Superintendent

Just before ten o'clock on the morning of February 25, Colonel Clark drew up his little army before the gate of Fort Sackville. As Colonel Hamilton looked from the fort at the men into whose hands he was delivering himself and his companions, he must have felt certain misgivings, and we cannot wonder that he referred to them as a 'mercyless set of Banditti.' Their tattered, campaign-stained clothing was an unsightly contrast to the neat-fitting, scarlet uniforms of his own well-drilled soldiers; their fatigue-drawn faces were covered with a rough stubble of beard; the squint of determination in their eyes and set of their jaws boded no good for any one who fell into their hands; he could see that their humor had been tried to the utmost; could Colonel Clark hold them in check? But it was now ten o'clock, and speculation must give way to fact.

The gate of the stockade slowly swung open. The

muffled drums rolled and Colonel Hamilton, the dreaded and hated Hair-Buyer, advanced at the head of his soldiers. With deliberate step he walked out of the fort and halted in front of Colonel Clark and with courtly military grace tendered him his sword.

Vincennes had surrendered to the Big Knives, and never again was the British flag to fly over this territory. The inner frontier was safe from British attack and all the plans of the boastful Hair-Buyer were brought to naught by the Big Knife and his sturdy followers.



CHAPTER XIII

PLOTS AND EXPEDITIONS

Colonel Clark might reasonably have looked forward to a period of rest and relaxation after the capitulation of the Hair-Buyer and his garrison. If so, he met disappointment. To begin with, he found himself in possession of prisoners that outnumbered his own men more than two to one. And then, lurking in the neighboring woods and plains, were thousands of redskin allies of the British, enough of them to fall upon him at any moment and overwhelm him. But the leader of the Big Knives wore an air of jaunty assurance that inspired his own men and disturbed his enemies.

On the 27th of February, three days after Hamilton had surrendered, the gunboat Willing with the cannon and supplies and its crew of forty-six men arrived at Vincennes. Although they were very much disappointed not to have been present at the taking of the fort, they proved a valuable reënforcement.

About this time Colonel Clark learned of the British relief expedition on its way down the Wabash from Detroit. This was the force that Governor Hamilton was waiting for when he vainly tried to arrange a three-days truce with the Big Knives. Clark was anxious to ambush them before they got word of the fall of Vincennes. So

Captain Helm was sent out with forty men in three small gunboats. They proceeded up the river, keeping scouts well ahead, in the hope of taking the enemy unawares. After several days they came upon the British just as they were making camp for the night. Colonel Clark's report merely says: '... They waited until all was quiet, surrounded and took the whole prisoners without firing a gun. Those gentlemen were so off their guard, and had so little apprehension of an enemy in that part of the world, that they could hardly persuade themselves that what they saw was real.'

On the 5th of March, Captain Helm returned to Vincennes with his prisoners and seven boats loaded with provisions and goods. In this Clark saw a good chance to reward his men. Never were soldiers more deserving of a prize for their efforts than these redoubtable Big Knives, yet the Colonel had no funds with which to pay them, and daily the value of American money — and there was very little of it — was depreciating. So the Colonel had the seven boats unloaded and then distributed the goods among his men. These, the soldiers were told, they could carry home if they chose or they could sell them to the merchants and traders of Vincennes for Spanish gold or English sovereigns. And luckily there was enough so that each man would be able to carry home a well-filled leather wallet.

The British prisoners and French militia from Detroit were still quite a problem to the Big Knives and one that must be solved immediately. Profiting by his previous experience, Colonel Clark first ordered out the French volunteers and lined them up. Instead of the usual joyous, care-free lot of Frenchmen, they were a dejected-looking lot. In their own minds they pictured themselves being

sent to the prison camps of the Americans or into slavery from which they might never escape. And the Colonel did not quiet their fears by his first remarks. How he upbraided them for joining the British against the Big Knives when their own King was an ally of the Americans! Finally his tone softened; perhaps they had believed the lies that the British had spread through the whole country. Now that they knew the true situation, perhaps they would take an oath that they would no longer bear arms against the Americans. If so, he would return their rifles to them with ample powder and shot, and he would give them boats so that they might return to their families and friends at Detroit. And, furthermore, the boats would be theirs to sell and they should divide the money among themselves.

Like the Frenchmen of Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes, these simple hunters and trappers were almost beside themselves with delight at this unexpected turn of events. More than this, they volunteered to fight *for* the Americans, although Colonel Clark had not asked this. *Vive les américains!* They were now brothers of the Big Knives.

So at one stroke Clark was not only relieved of a complete regiment of prisoners, but he had turned them into staunch and loyal friends.

As for Hamilton, the Hair-Buyer, and his British regulars, the daring American leader had other plans.

On the 7th of March they were put under a guard of twenty-five men and started down the Wabash River on their long journey to Virginia and confinement. Although the prisoners outnumbered their guards, they had developed such an unusual respect for these Big Knives, who laughed at enemies, white or red, and smiled at hardship

as being unworthy of their notice, there was little danger of their trying to escape into the 'drowned country' and there was little chance that they could overpower their captors.

On reaching Virginia, the Hair-Buyer and his lieutenants, particularly the 'Indian partisans,' were given a rough reception for the cruelty and butchery they had instigated against the forts and settlements of the frontier. Hamilton for a time was put in irons, and it was not until George Washington himself interceded that he was treated as a prisoner of war rather than as a murderer. One of the renegade white leaders of the Indians, for fear of the fury of the Americans, killed himself.

Now that the reduction of Vincennes was complete, the path to Detroit lay clear before them. The only question was, should they advance at once?

The Willing had brought a messenger up the river bearing dispatches from Patrick Henry. Here was the welcome news that in the spring a force of five hundred men would be sent from Virginia to join the Big Knives. Clark called a council of his officers to discuss whether or not it would be advisable to advance on Detroit at once, equipped as they were, before the British could send reënforcements. Or would it be better to wait until his own fresh troops should arrive and thereby assure the success of the campaign beyond a doubt?

Although every officer realized the advantage of going ahead without loss of time, they also realized that the soldiers were worn and tired after the fatigues of the march from Illinois and some of the men were sick with malarial fever and overexhaustion. Caution prevailed over expediency, and it was reluctantly decided that the march to Detroit should be postponed until the middle of

June. In the mean time the little army should return to the Illinois towns, where every preparation would be made. A small garrison was left at Vincennes, and the plan was for all the troops to make their rendezvous there for the great offensive against Detroit the following summer.

What a fatal decision this proved to be! How different the life of George Rogers Clark would have been had he pushed on to Detroit! From the British archives we now know, what he did not know, that there were less than a hundred men able to defend the fort of Detroit, and that his reputation as a fighter had so awed the Indians, even as far away as the shores of Lake Erie and Lake Michigan, that they would not have joined their British allies against him.

At this time George Rogers Clark was only in his twenty-sixth year. More than half of his life still lay ahead of him. Yet with the capture of Vincennes he had reached the pinnacle of his success. The years to come were to be filled with disillusionment and bitter disappointment. The selfish ambitions and jealousies of new military and civil officers coming into the frontier country; the grafting and vicious dishonesty of the politicians and of the ever-grasping land companies; the neglect of the Government of Virginia combined with the virtual repudiation of her obligations; and the procrastination of Congress and Congressional commissions, each contributed to the stormy bitterness in store for him.

When Clark led his own men back to Vincennes in June, 1779, to join the promised troops from Virginia and Kentucky, instead of finding the five hundred that had been promised him, he found thirty. This was the fault of Colonel John Bowman (who must not be confused with Captain Joseph Bowman), who was in command of the

reënforcements. On his way to join Colonel Clark, he decided to make a side expedition against the Shawnee towns, win a battle or two, and cover himself with glory. At the time the Shawnees were quiet, for they feared that Clark himself might lead an expedition against them if they went too actively on the warpath. Therefore, Bowman only succeeded in stirring them up and making them more actively resentful against the Big Knives. Some of his men were killed by the Indians and more of them deserted. The whole action had the effect of ruining George Rogers Clark's plan of campaign against Detroit. This was a bitter disappointment to Clark, who knew only too late that the opportune time had passed. Now he was not strong enough to risk the attack, and he abandoned the idea.

Instead, he distributed his troops between the Illinois towns and Vincennes, with the exception of a few that he led back to the Falls of the Ohio.

But what Clark had already done immediately proved its importance, for during the summer of 1779 nearly twenty thousand new settlers crossed the mountains and took up land in Kentucky. Indians were still to be encountered occasionally, and there was the wilderness to be conquered, but the fighting frontier had been moved to beyond the Ohio River, and any raiding parties of British and Indians from the north would have considerable difficulty in getting through to the settlements.

Thomas Jefferson had succeeded Patrick Henry as Governor of Virginia, and on Clark's arrival at the Falls of the Ohio, he found dispatches from Jefferson ordering him to build a fort near the mouth of the Ohio. This fort had both military and political importance; military because it was a strategic point for protecting the Mississippi

trade, and political because it would tend to discourage the Spanish from crossing the Mississippi and assuming the rôle of protector of the Illinois towns, after which they might try to hold the Illinois country.

The war in the West had now become defensive. Funds with which to buy supplies and pay the troops did not exist, and credit was running lower and lower. In desperation George Rogers Clark finally endorsed the requisition orders himself and thereby became legally responsible for their payment even beyond the extent of his own fortune. His patriotism and his love for the cause in which he was fighting so outweighed any thoughts of selfishness or prudence that he contracted debts purely in the interest of his men. And these debts were to keep him a poor man till the day of his death. They even prevented him from marrying the lovely girl with whom he had fallen in love, the beautiful Terese.

During the winter of 1780, the British planned to recapture the territory that Clark had taken from them, and further, they made preparations to attack the Kentucky settlements and kill or drive out every last white man there. They sent four expeditions, all from different directions, but keeping in touch with each other. One from the upper Mississippi, one from the lower Mississippi, and the other two from Chicago and Detroit.

Colonel Clark had his hands full. But with superhuman energy he joined his forces at Cahokia just the day before the British attacked the place.

For weeks he had had no word from his sweetheart, Terese, down at St. Louis. He must know of her safety. Also, what plans had Señor de Leyba for repulsing the British and Indians now that Spain was at war with Great Britain.

As fast as horse and boat could carry him, he had dashed off to St. Louis, where he had found Don de Leyba had made every possible preparation to repulse any siege. De Leyba even offered the command of his own troops to Clark, but as no one knew when or where the attack would come, Clark declined the honor.

But there were a few stolen moments from the excitement of preparation when the lovers were alone together. Terese, both tearful and smiling, begged her gallant American lover not to leave her. She pleaded with him to stay and take command of the fort at St. Louis. His very presence would make the place invincible. And if, by any chance, anything should happen to him, she would be there to take care of him. For who would look out for him if he were back at Cahokia? Some crude French woman, perhaps, or an Indian squaw! He must not go, he must not go.

But George Rogers Clark felt that duty called him to the defense of Cahokia, to stand with his Big Knives when the storm broke. Terese realized this, too, and admired her lover all the more for his faithfulness.

The next day the painted savages with their English leaders swarmed about the stockade at Cahokia. Though they attacked with all the cunning of consummate woodcraft, they were no match for the Big Knives and soon withdrew to their boats to paddle and pole up the river to St. Louis.

Now, Señor de Leyba had agreed with Clark that in the event of an attack on St. Louis the Spaniards would fire signal guns from the fort, and at the signal Clark would march his Big Knives to make a flank attack against the Indians. So the garrison at Cahokia strained their ears to hear the firing. But no sound came to break the sleepy

quiet of the summer's afternoon, and the Big Knives rested on their guns within the fort.

The records of what happened are not as explicit as they might be. We know that the signal guns at St. Louis *were* fired when the Indians attacked. We know that the attack was much more determined than at Cahokia and the records tell us that Señor de Leyba was seriously wounded in the encounter. Many of his soldiers were killed and numbers of the people massacred or carried off to the torture stake. We do not know whether a messenger from St. Louis got through to Cahokia before George Rogers Clark received word from the Falls of the Ohio that another army of Indians and British were making a determined march on that post. There is nothing to tell us whether Clark learned, before he set out on that perilous cross-country march disguised as an Indian, that Señor de Leyba was dead and the dainty Terese left alone amidst the dangers and horrors of the ransacked village. In all probability he knew nothing of the battle, for his departure from Cahokia was so unexpected.

In the course of a few weeks Terese managed to return to New Orleans, where she had friends with whom she could stay until after the wars were over, until her frontiersman knight errant could be relieved from his military duties long enough to claim her as his bride.

Then he heard that the second campaign was directed against the Falls of the Ohio; that Captain Bird was leading an army of seven hundred Indians and whites against the fort and was trying to reach it before Clark could return from Cahokia. But Clark with two companions disguised as Indians set out on foot for a three-hundred-mile journey through a country that was now swarming with savages on the warpath, and by well-nigh incredible effort

they reached the fort before Bird's attack. As a matter of fact, Bird could have reached the Falls ahead of Clark, but when he was still a hundred miles away he heard a false report that Clark had already arrived, and at that word his Indians refused to go farther. They just would not fight the Chief of the Big Knives, for they had learned to their sorrow that it was useless. So Bird turned his Indians loose on some of the smaller forts and settlements and massacred men, women, and children.

The other two British campaigns were effectively stopped, one in the south and one in the north, and Clark now had a little time to look about him and plan for the future.

He went to Virginia and consulted Governor Jefferson, laying before him another plan to reduce Detroit, which Jefferson highly approved. Even General Washington gave orders that Clark was to draw on the fort at Pittsburgh for supplies and a regiment of soldiers in addition to two thousand men that Jefferson promised to send from Virginia.

It was while he was in Virginia that George Rogers Clark was honored for the service he had already rendered his country and was made a Brigadier-General. But fate and fortune were to conspire against him now that he was a General, where they had heaped favors on him as a Colonel.

A war cannot be carried on without money or credit, and the commandants of the Western posts had neither. While General Clark was in the East, conditions became so bad at Kaskaskia that the troops finally had to be withdrawn to Fort Jefferson. Provisions in the town were ample, but the traders would not sell them to the Commandant unless he paid for them in cash, and cash he did not have. His

force was not strong enough to commandeer supplies, so for more than two weeks he fed his men on half rations and then led his tattered and starving garrison out of the town amidst the jeers and gibes of the fickle French, who had so recently hailed them as brothers.

The conditions at Fort Jefferson were no better; in fact, they were worse, for when the men from Kaskaskia arrived there were more mouths to feed and food was not procurable, so Fort Jefferson had to be abandoned. Colonel Montgomery, who was in command, wrote to the Governor: 'Troops in a very low and Starving Condition, nor was there any goods wherewith to purchase. From the Illinois nothing could be expected, the credit of the State being long since lost there and no supplies coming from this place, occasioned an Evacuation of that Post, which for want of Provisions, took place on the 8th June last.'

The haggard little army poled and rowed their flatboats up the river to the Falls of the Ohio, and there Montgomery wrote: 'Since my arrival here, I find things in the same Condition — not a mouthful for the troops to eat, nor money to purchase it with; and the credit of the government is worn bare.' Had the British made an attack at this time they could have made good their frequently repeated threat of sweeping the Big Knives out of the country.

And at this time General Clark was struggling in the East to raise supplies and money and men to carry to the relief of his valiant and determined Big Knives. Promises! He was given plenty of them. But starving men cannot be fed on promises. And money, good solid cash, was no longer to be found in the Virginia treasury.

And then two disastrous things happened. Benedict Arnold, the traitor, now in the service of the British, swept

down on Virginia, ravaging plantations and destroying property and crops. The two thousand men promised for the Detroit campaign had to be held in Virginia. The second and final blow came from an unexpected source. Patrick Henry, the man who had first listened to and encouraged the young frontier patriot from beyond the Alleghanies, in a moment of political jealousy against Thomas Jefferson, introduced a resolution in the Virginia Assembly 'to put a stop of the Expedition lately organized against Detroit, and to take all necessary steps for disposing of, or applying to other uses, the stores and provisions laid in for that purpose.'

Patrick Henry, the patriot, for a personal, petty grievance, was willing to sacrifice not only his friend, George Rogers Clark, but was to bring years of bitter struggle, bloodshed, and massacre on the sturdy frontier settlers of Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FINAL TRIBUTE

George Rogers Clark had gone beyond the Alleghanies into the Dark and Bloody Ground for romance and adventure. There were his dreams; there he found the piquant Terese and to her gave his heart; and there were the sturdy, forthright pioneers, calloused under the lash of hardship, but men who like himself had dreams of freedom and a yearning love for solitude and peace that comes only from fighting that friendly old enemy, Nature. There also he found bitterness and tragedy and disappointment. But disillusionment was too petty for his understanding. He could see that success must eventually come out of the efforts and ideals of the pioneer stock and he dedicated his own life to the service of these people.

Along with the new settlers arriving in the Kentucky country came political jackals and hirelings of the land companies. These unscrupulous men could find success only in stirring up friction between the different towns and political units and in playing one military leader against another. Law and order had not yet been established, and the authority of force was the only authority recognized.

The greatest opponent of these schemers was George

Rogers Clark, and it was against him, naturally, that they directed their bitterest attacks and about him that they spread the most impossible stories of dishonesty and disloyalty. With vicious and well-planned cunning these false stories were carried back to the people in Virginia and to Congress. At first they were not believed, for General Clark's friends knew that he would not stoop to anything unworthy of a great soldier. By 1782 more counties had been organized in Kentucky, and in each there was a body of militia under the command of its own colonel. By express order from the Governor of Virginia, General Clark could only call upon them to lend him aid in building forts. There was naturally a great amount of rivalry between the companies of militia from the different counties, and some of the colonels in command of them thought more of gaining personal glory and a local reputation than of coöperation in time of an Indian attack. But above all, these narrow-minded men coveted the position of affection and esteem that was held by General Clark.

This same year, 1782, while George Rogers Clark was at the Falls of the Ohio there was a determined attack made, by the Indians, instigated and led by the British, against the frontier settlements at Blue Lick on the Licking River. General Clark knew nothing about it until after the battle was over and the Kentucky militia had been put to rout with the loss of many men and several of their commanding officers. None of the survivors of the massacre wanted to accept the blame for the blunders that had been committed. Some one finally suggested that the fault lay in the fact that Clark had failed to build certain forts that he had been ordered to construct by the Governor. This was a futile and far-fetched excuse, but it served to pass the buck. General Clark had tried to build the forts, but he

MUTINY ON THE WABASH EXPEDITION OF 1786

had been supplied neither with funds nor with men to do it, and when he had called upon the militia for assistance, they had either refused him or deserted him before the work was well begun. Yet the cry against him for the Blue Lick disaster was so violent and the reports of his conduct were so maliciously distorted that he offered his resignation to the Governor, and after some hesitation it was accepted.

Clark now went into retirement at Mulberry Hill, near Louisville. Here he had prepared a home for his parents and his younger sisters and brother William. It was this brother William who was chosen in 1803 by President Thomas Jefferson to go with Captain Meriwether Lewis on the famous expedition to explore the great Northwest country as far as the Pacific Ocean.

Of these years spent on the beautiful plantation we know very little. He was a ruined man as far as things of the world are concerned. The State bills he had endorsed in desperation during the Illinois campaign had never been settled by Virginia, and Congress was continually ignoring them. In a letter to his brother Jonathan he said, 'For several years I have lived quite retired, reading, hunting, fowling, corresponding with a few chosen friends in different parts of the continent, and in attending to private business, without concerning myself with that of the public.'

The General had little opportunity to repair his own fortunes, for he was continually pressed by lawsuits resulting from the old endorsements. Whenever he got a little money ahead or acquired land, it was taken away from him to satisfy his creditors. His father and brothers, Jonathan and William, were considered wealthy men, but they dared not give him very much at a time, for it was a

foregone conclusion that it would be taken away from him in the law courts. When George Rogers's father died in 1799, he left a large estate to his children, but to George Rogers he gave only a couple of negro slaves. In those days there were no bankruptcy laws to which he could apply for relief, and he was destined to live out his life as a poor man.

Terese! Terese! How constantly she must have been in his thoughts during his long, lonely rambles through the woods or as he sat meditating beside a forest stream. She would have understood his disappointments and would have comforted him. The plantation, the magnificent house, the slaves to think only of her comfort were part of the dreams they had fashioned together on the moonlit banks of the swirling Mississippi; and how he dreamed them over and over again! They were the dreams of what might have been, and in them he found lonely comfort as well as a haunting, unsatisfied yearning. Why had he been so loyal to his Big Knives and served his State at the expense of his happiness and the happiness of Terese? Why had he ruined himself and made his own life a burden for that State that now neglected him and repudiated the obligations he had assumed in her name? But no, he would not regret his faithfulness to the struggling frontiersmen who had again and again looked to him for the protection of their lives, and the safety of the homes they were fighting to win from the secret, mysterious forest and from the skulking redskin. He could not have left his loyal Big Knives when they were starving and surrounded by enemies to go in search of his own happiness — his Terese.

Years went by during which George Rogers wondered what had happened to his wistful, dark-eyed *señorita*. And then word reached him that she had sailed back to Spain to dream her dreams that she knew could never come true.

She had gone into a convent, where the world could not disturb her and where she could pray for and continue to long for her great, blond Big Knife lover who had found her in the wilderness and whom the wilderness had again swallowed up.

After the death of his mother and father, George Rogers moved from the old plantation at Mulberry Hill to Clarksville just across the river from Louisville. This was a tract of one hundred and fifty thousand acres that was given by the State of Virginia and afterward confirmed by Congress to the soldiers and officers who had fought as Clark's Big Knives. General Clark was made president of the commission that surveyed and allotted the lands, and as this business occupied much of his time, he moved there in 1803 and built his cabin on a point of land overlooking the Falls of the Ohio.

It was from here that he saw the Lewis and Clark expedition start for the unknown West. How he must have compared in his own mind the departure of his brother William to the departure of his Big Knives from this very place twenty-five years before. Would William have the same success — and the same reward? And General Clark was still living in the little log cabin three years later when the boats of the returning explorers pushed up the Ohio and Captains Clark and Lewis landed at their starting-point. From William's own lips, George Rogers learned of the great work they had accomplished, a work that has not been forgotten by the people of America. Yet it was no more important than the campaigns of the Big Knives that have all but disappeared into oblivion.

In 1809, General Clark had a serious infection of his right foot and it was decided that in order to save his life his leg must be amputated. In those days anæsthetics were

unknown. The grizzled old soldier asked that a drummer and a fifer be brought to the house and that they play the old marching tunes and songs that had stirred the spirits of the Big Knives on the long marches to Kaskaskia and Vincennes. For two hours during the operation the men played and the old General, with his eyes closed, never flinched as the bone was severed and the red-hot iron was applied to the wound to stop the flow of blood.

Major William Croghan, Clark's nephew, now took the old soldier to live with him at his country home near Louisville. Here his every want was gratified and he was nursed with tenderest care. He had suffered a stroke of paralysis a year or two before, and now with his right leg gone he was confined to a wheel chair.

But George Rogers Clark had not been entirely forgotten by his political friends in the East. When news of his crippled condition reached Virginia there was one young statesman, Charles Fenton Mercer, who felt that a public tribute from the people of Virginia might bring a bit of cheer to the General. So he introduced a bill into the Assembly calling for an expression of gratitude for the services of the old Chief of the Big Knives and calling on the Governor to have a sword manufactured at the State Armory to be presented to the General.

It was in the fall of 1812 that the presentation was made. General Clark sat in his wheel chair on the broad veranda of Major Croghan's home. The autumn breeze flicked at the cape around the stooped shoulders of the Big Knife. His blue eyes gazed with a resigned contentment across the rolling hills and meadows of peaceful Kentucky. How different was the Dark and Bloody Ground now! The General's friends were gathered around him and a young man came forward who said a few simple words of presen-

tation and handed him a handsome sword in the name of the Governor and people of Virginia. The General bowed his head and a mist came before his eyes. Was he thinking of that missing companion, Terese, who would have made this belated tribute seem so much more worth while to him had she been there? But he was the old soldier, the Big Knife, and he must not give way to emotion. He cleared his throat and looked up.

'Young man,' he said, 'when Virginia needed a sword, I found her one. Now I need bread!'

And then emotion mastered him and he could say no more.

For six more years General George Rogers Clark sat in the wheel chair at the home of his nephew, lost in reveries that none but an old frontiersman and Indian fighter might know. And then on February 13, 1818, his spirit slipped away to roam through the happy hunting ground where Indians were good Indians and pioneers' visions came true.

In the beautiful Cave Hill cemetery, at Louisville, Kentucky, is a small headstone that bears the following simple lines:

GEN'L GEORGE ROGERS CLARK

Born O.S., November 9, 1752

Died February 13, 1818

THE END

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